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THE NEW YORKER

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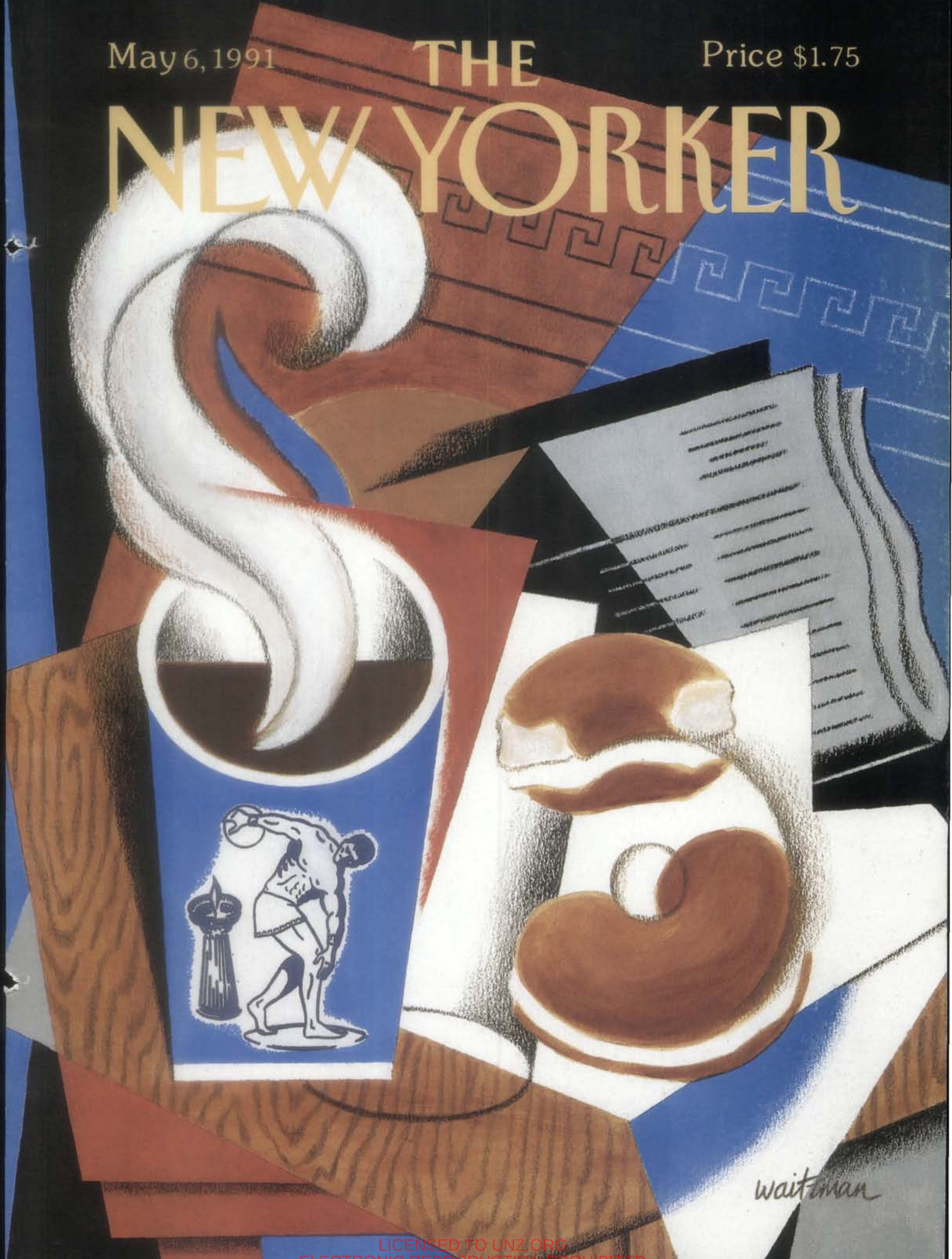

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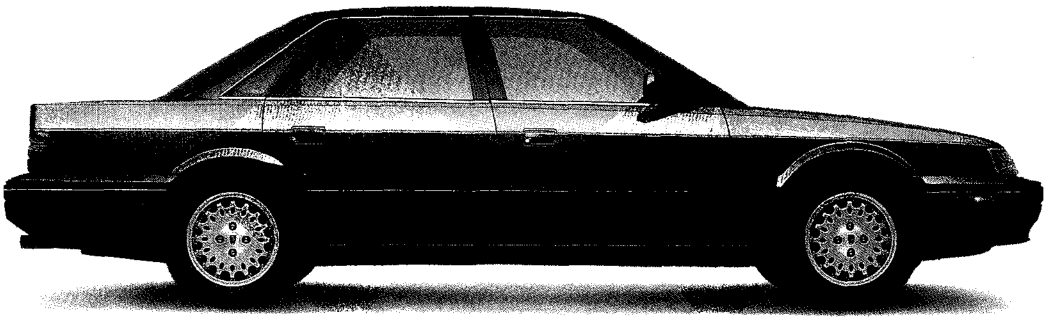

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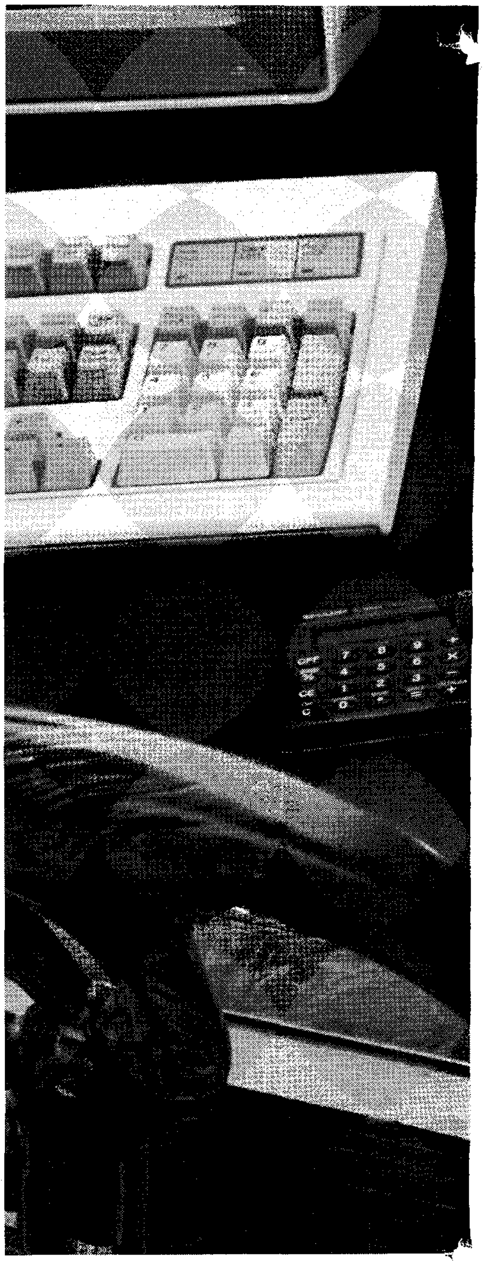

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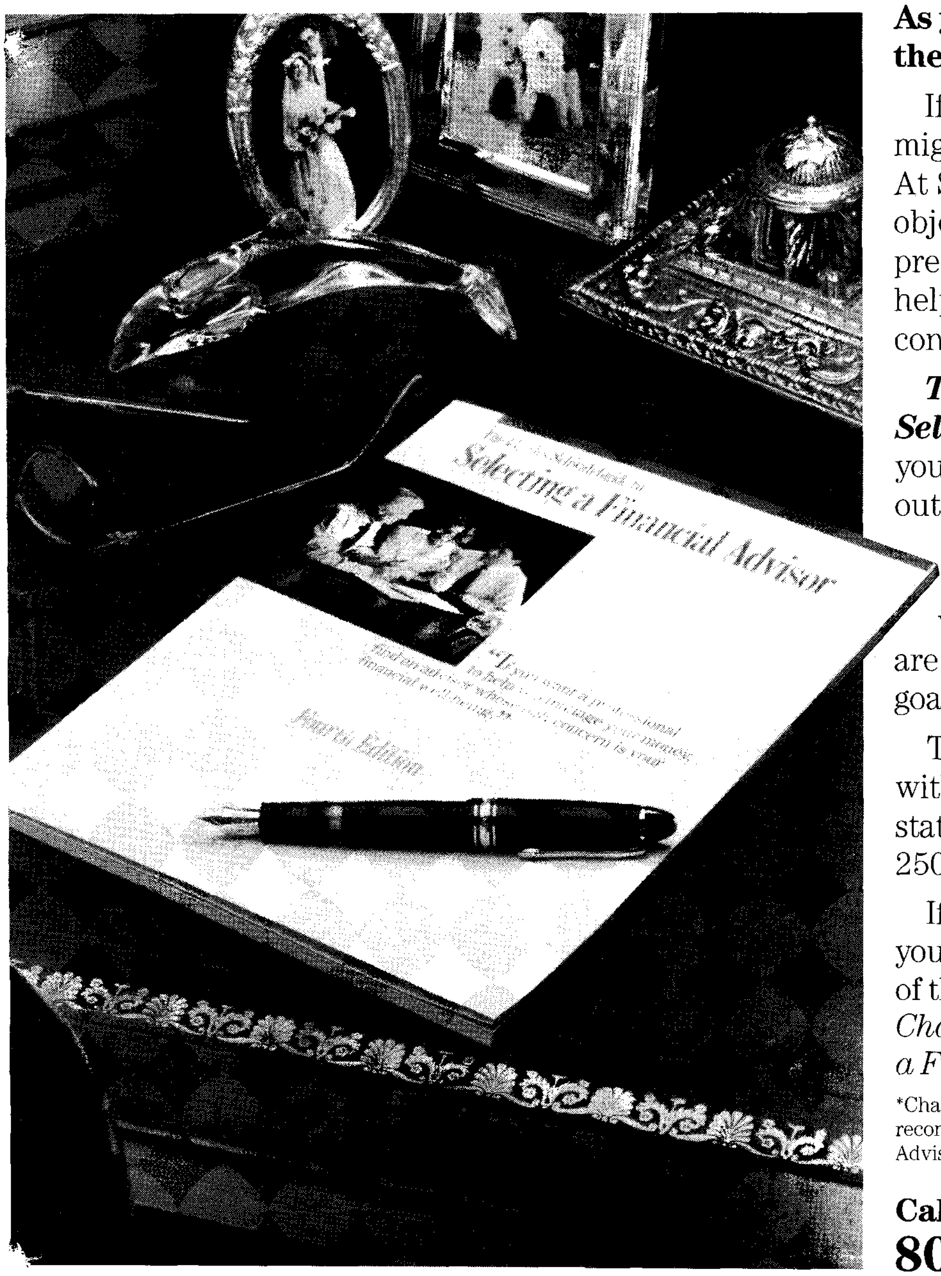

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

AMERICAN liberals sometimes respond to insult by labelling their adversaries McCarthyites. The opponents typically reply that Senator McCarthy may have been, at best, paranoid, but that there really were Communists in the government during the forties and fifties. In his new comedy, "Red Scare on Sunset" (at the WPA; through May 5), Charles Busch takes the conservative tack a step further: *everyone* of that era was a pinko. Busch's character, the Hollywood actress Mary Dale, isn't suspicious without cause. Everybody around her in Tinseltown, circa 1951, does, in fact, turn out to be Red: her downsliding husband, Frank Taggart (Arnie Kolodner); the director (Mark Hamilton) of her current picture, a musical about Lady Godiva; and her light-in-the-loafers servant, Malcolm (Andy Halliday). At one point, even Mary's best friend, the radio-talk-show host Pat Pilford (Julie Halston, who's a strong solution of Rosalind Russell and Ann Miller), spouts Marxist ideas. Command central for the radicals is a Method-acting school on Sunset. The school's subversive goals include "the end of the star system" *and "no special lighting or filters"* for screen goddesses. It's an agenda unacceptable to Mary.

And, in all likelihood, to Mr. Busch. He may build his plays ("Vampire Lesbians of Sodom," "Psycho Beach Party," "The Lady in Question") around a tight ensemble, a kind of Mercury Theatre of camp, but each work depends for its success on his animating presence. The opening scene of "Red Scare," for example, from which he's absent, is excruciatingly banal; then he enters, wearing a pastel-green creation (by the witty costumier Debra Tennenbaum) and sweeping all before him, like Loretta Young in her TV days, and the fun begins. The rest of the evening is far from perfect. There are lapses of narrative logic, and a creeping sense, especially in Act II, that the joke is wearing thin. To prop up sagging dramaturgy, Mr. Busch too often relies on questionable histrionics: a Lypsinka-like musical number on a movie set, and—singing of another sort—a climactic naming of names on the steps of the Capitol. But while Mr. Busch's playwriting can fall flat, his performing almost always remains buoyant. To those who find no pleasure in it we can only respond, in the words of one of his obvious muses, Joan Crawford, that perhaps he's "an acquired taste—like Ravel."

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

BREAKING LEGS—Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia have the leads in a new comedy by Tom Dulack. John Tillinger directed. In previews. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—Presenting **WALKING THE DEAD**, a new play by Keith Curran. Scotty Bloch, Ashley Gardner, Joe Mantello, Christopher Shaw, Cotter Smith, Myra Taylor, and Tyrone Wilson make up the cast. Directed by Mark Ramont. In previews. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

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Daisy Eagan in "The Secret Garden"

FAYEBIRD—A new play by Diane Amsterdam, presented by the American Jewish Theatre. In previews. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

FRIDAYS—A 1981 play by Andrew Johns, with Henderson Forsythe and John Peakes. Presented by the Riverside Shakespeare Company and directed by Gus Kaikkonen. Previews begin May 3. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME—Everett Quinton's new show, which is billed as "a quasimusical." In previews. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

LETTERS TO A STUDENT REVOLUTIONARY—A play by Elizabeth Wong, presented by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. With Caryn Ann Chow, Andrew Ingkavet, Daniel D. Kim, Mary Lum, Cecilia Pang, and Keenan Shimizu. Previews begin May 7. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

THE OLD BOY—A new play by A. R. Gurney, with Stephen Collins, Clark Gregg, Lizbeth Mackay, Nan Martin, Matt McGrath, and Richard Woods. Directed by John Rubinstein. Previews April 30-May 4. Opens May 5 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD—A play by Timberlake Wertenbaker, set in eighteenth-century Australia. Produced here under the auspices of the Broadway Alliance, the show has also been done in London and Hartford. Directed by Mark Lamos. Opens April 29 at 6:30. (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 307-4100.)

THE RESISTIBLE RISE OF ARTURO UI—John Turturro and David Patrick Kelly in a production of Brecht's 1951 play. Previews through May 7. Opens May 8 at 7. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

STATES OF SHOCK—A new play by Sam Shepard, starring John Malkovich. Bill Hart was the director. In previews. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

THE STICK WIFE—A play by Darrah Cloud, set in the sixties, about the wives of three Birmingham Klansmen. With Michael Countryman, Lindsay Crouse, Lanny Flaherty, Murphy Guyer, Margo Martindale, and Julie White. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

THE WAY OF THE WORLD—A modern-dress version of Congreve's play, directed by David Greenspan. With Jayne Atkinson, André Braugher, James Lally, Ruth Maleczech, and Mary Schultz. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES—A new musical starring Keith Carradine. The book is by Peter Stone, the score by Cy Coleman, and the lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Directed and choreographed by Tommy Tune. Preview on April 30. Opens May 1 at 6:15. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

NEW THIS SEASON

ADVICE FROM A CATERPILLAR—The brat-pack actress Ally Sheedy is perfectly awful in this rather effortful comedy by Douglas Carter Beane. Mr. Beane is the stage doorman uptown at the Neil Simon Theatre (in case you want to stick your head in). Despite some nifty work by Harley Venton, Dennis Chris*topher, and David Lansbury—and solid di*rection from David's father, Edgar—the evening is not a great success. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/15/91.) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

AND THE WORLD GOES 'ROUND: THE SONGS OF KANDER & EBB—A musical revue, with Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Brenda Pressley, Jim Walton, and Karen Ziëmba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 246-0102.)

BLACK EAGLES—A play by Leslie Lee, about the Tuskegee Airmen, the black fighter pilots of the Second World War. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

BUDDY: THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY—Anyone who thinks that rock and roll lives on had better steer clear of this ersatz docu-musical about the life of Buddy Holly. (11/19/90) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

CARREÑO—A show based on the life of Teresa Carreño, the Venezuelan composer, pianist, conductor, and singer. Written and performed by Pamela Ross and directed by Gene Frankel. Most performances are in English; a few are in Spanish. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes May 12.)

DAUGHERTY & FIELD OFF-BROADWAY—The cabaret team of Bill Daugherty and Robin Field in a revue of swing and show tunes. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF—The Israeli actor Topol makes a commanding Tevye—the best of all of them—in this production, which falls somewhere between revival and facsimile. The songs are by Bock and Harnick; the dances and staging are re-created from the Jerome Robbins originals; and the costumes are from the Patricia Zipprodt originals. (12/13/90) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510.)

THE GOOD TIMES ARE KILLING ME—A play by Lynda Barry. Mark Brokaw directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

GRAND FINALE—The Ubu Repertory Theatre presents a 1987 farce by Copi (a.k.a. Raul Damonte). Translated from the French by Michael Feingold and directed by André Ernotte. The cast includes Jack Koenig, Keith McDermott, and Margo Skinner. (15 W. 28th St. 679-7562. Closes May 5.)

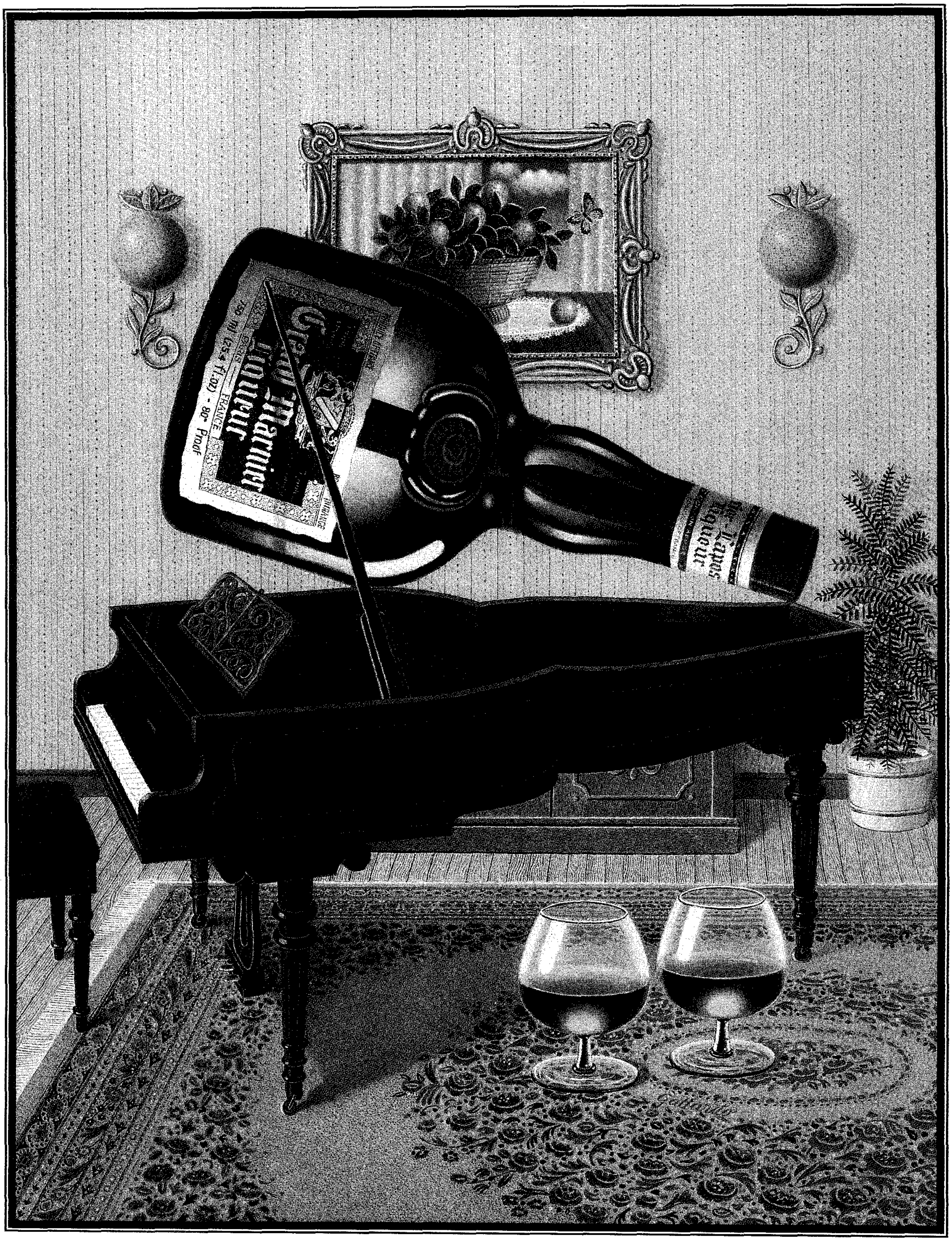
GYPSY—The Tyne Daly-led revival of the Laurents-Styne-Sondheim musical returns to Broadway. Everything's coming up you-know-what. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

THE HAUNTED HOST—Harvey Fierstein and Jason Workman star in a revival of Robert Patrick's 1964 comedy. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

I HATE HAMLET—In Paul Rudnick's jokey farce, Nicol Williamson gives a stunning comedy performance as the ghost of John Barrymore, summoned to aid a young Hollywood actor who has been booked to play Hamlet in the Park. Mr. Williamson is ably supported by some of the other actors, but the show boils down to a marvellous solo turn. (4/22/91) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

IVY ROWE—Barbara Bates Smith in a one-woman show adapted from Lee Smith's novel "Fair and Tender Ladies." (Provincetown, 133 Macdougal St. 477-5048.)

JACKIE MASON: BRAND NEW—The comedian brings his one-man show to Broadway again. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting three plays in rotating repertory: Shakespeare's **julius caesar** and a double bill of Georg Büchner's **woyzeck** and **leonce and lena.** (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Jeffrey Essmann's Artificial Reality—A one-man show. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200. Closes May 11.)

The Kingfish—A play about Huey Long, by Larry L. King and Ben Z. Grant. With John McConnell in the title role. Directed by Perry Martin. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in New York during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Miss Saigon—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

Modigliani—A revival of Dennis McIntyre's play, with Ronald Guttman as the artist. (Jewish Repertory Theatre, 344 E. 14th St. 505-2667.)

Once on This Island—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Only the Truth Is Funny—The comedian Rick Reynolds' one-man show. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 246-0102.)

Penn & Teller's Refrigerator Tour—The heavenly twain meet again. The new tricks are just as mysterious (and frightening) as the old ones. As for the tricksters, their bogus candor is intact, and they've never been funnier. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

Red Scare on Sunset—Charles Busch wrote and stars in this comedy about an actress battling Communism in nineteen-fifties Hollywood. Directed by Kenneth Elliott. Also with Arnie Kolokner. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Closes May 5.)

Remembrance—A play by Graham Reid, with Aideen O'Kelly and Henry J. Quinn. Directed by Terence Lamude. (Irish Arts, 553 W. 51st St. 307-7171.)

A Room of One's Own—Eileen Atkins is sublime in this stage adaptation of the Virginia Woolf essay. Easily the most civilized entertainment on offer, this one-woman show is something every lively-minded young woman above the age of fifteen—fourteen if she's particularly lively-minded—will want to see. (3/18/91) (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Secret Garden—Mandy Patinkin and Daisy Eagan lead the cast of a new musical based on the Frances Hodgson Burnett classic. Marsha Norman wrote the book and lyrics, and Lucy Simon provided the score. Susan H. Schulman directed. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

The Substance of Fire—Ron Rifkin gives an impeccable performance as a publisher—a refugee from Nazi Germany—whose difficulties with his grown children are no greater than those with himself. The play, by Jon Robin Baitz, is not flawless, but it is consistently absorbing and very well acted, under the direction of Daniel Sullivan. With Sarah Jessica Parker, Patrick Breen, Jon Tenney, and Maria Tucci. (4/1/91) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Sum of Us—David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed. (11/5/90) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Three Sisters—A negligible production. (4/29/91) (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-8755. Closes May 4.)

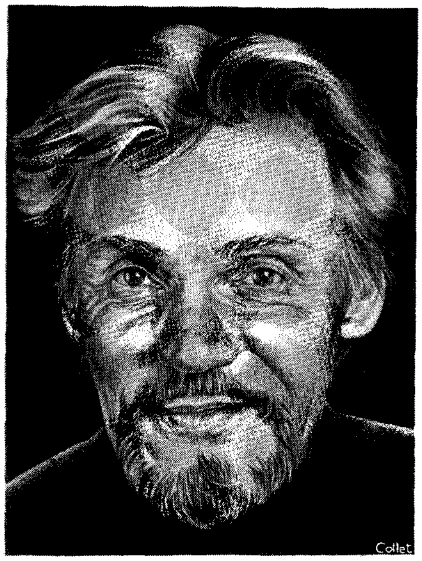
Village Light Opera Group—Presenting a brief engagement of Rodgers and Hammerstein's **carousel.** With a full orchestra and a cast of sixty, including Jamie Lightstone, Rodne Brown, Teresa L. Hoover, Priscilla Reeves, Brian Cooper, and Kevin Walsh. Directed by Margaret Rose and conducted by Ronald Noll. (Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St. 279-4200. Closes May 5.)

LONG RUNS

cats: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **city of angels:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run turns thirty-one this month. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **forbidden broadway 1991:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **forever plaid:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.) . . . **grand hotel:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **les misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. With J. Mark McVey, Christy Brown, and Robert Dusold. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **other people's money:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **the phantom of the opera:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is forgettable. With Mark Jacoby, Karen Culliver, and Hugh Panero. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **prelude to a kiss:** Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. Ashley Crow is the bride, Steve Guttenberg is the groom, and John Randolph is the old man. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.) . . . **six degrees of separation:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **smoke on the mountain:** This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray, it recreates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of gospel singers have been invited to appear. With Ms. Ray, Reathel Bean, Kevin Chamberlain, Robert Olsen and Mimi Bessette. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

DANCE

DURING a lecture at City Center recently, Twyla Tharp opened up her working mind to the public, and a couple of hundred people fell in. We can report that, as minds go, Miss Tharp's is capacious, but you have to watch your step in there: the place is teeming with life. Also, thoughts are hurtling around with such velocity that the unwary pedestrian can really get beaned. During Miss Tharp's daily working process in the studio, some of these projectiles get regulated—sort of. As she explained the physics and metaphysics of how she makes dances, her mental state began to resemble traffic patterns down on Canal Street during rush hour. Half the drivers are making for the tunnel to Jersey; the other half are aiming for the Manhattan Bridge. As you might imagine, progress can be painstaking. "I have this war in my head," Miss Tharp said. "One side knows that to move forward we have to forget, the other side that to move forward we have to remember."



Vladimir Vasiliev: a staging of "Don Quixote" for A.B.T.

"Do you always choreograph to music?" someone in the audience asked. "I listen to music a lot," Miss Tharp said. "But dance has a life of its own, and you have to separate the two. Music generates energy, emotion, form, but every body has its own mechanics, a different pulse, and they have nothing to do with Beethoven and Bach." She went on to say that once she finds a movement idea she likes, she tends to "channel" it through variations of rhythm and metre. "What I try to do is put this brain on trance," she said, "and then the idea impacts, and I try to record that, retain it, and move it on down the line." Someone reminded Miss Tharp that she once made the statement "Classic is as classic does," and asked her what she meant. Miss Tharp rolled her eyes. "Classic is as classic does," she said. "Yes, I must have said that in my arrogant days."

Speaking of classics, American Ballet Theatre will perform an all-Tharp program at the Met on May 4 and May 6: "Push Comes to Shove," "Nine Sinatra Songs," and "In the Upper Room."

New York City Ballet—April 30-May 3 at 8, May 4 at 2 and 8, and May 5 at 1 and 7: "The Sleeping Beauty." . . . ¶ May 7 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ May 8 at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," and "Stars and Stripes." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. The season continues through June 30.)

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DANCE–Cont'd

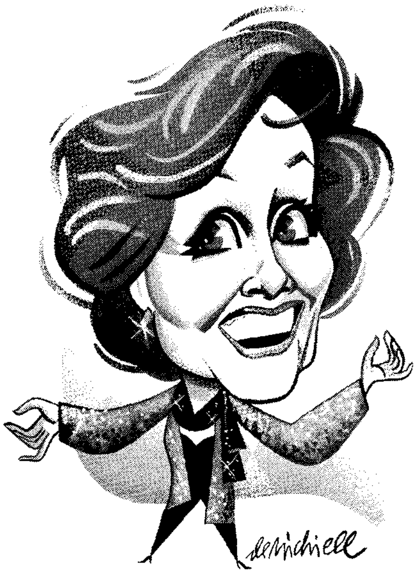
American Ballet Theatre—April 29 at 8: "Birthday Offering," "Jardin aux Lilas," and "Sinfonietta" (company première). . . . ¶ April 30 at 8, May 1 at 2 and 8, and May 2-3 at 8: Vladimir Vasiliev's new staging of "Don Quixote." . . . ¶ May 4 at 2 and 8 and May 6 at 8: "Push Comes to Shove," "Nine Sinatra Songs," and "In the Upper Room." . . . ¶ May 7-8 at 8: "Ballet Imperial," "Pillar of Fire," and "Rodeo." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 22.)

Limón Dance Company—Final performances of the engagement. April 28 at 2 and May 1 at 8: "Air for the G String," "The Unsung," "Day on Earth," and "Cleave." . . . ¶ April 28 at 7:30, May 3 at 8, and May 5 at 2: "Tanzlieder," "Day on Earth," and "Retablos." . . . ¶ April 30, May 2, and May 4 at 8: "Ritmo Jondo," "Hollow Lady," "Volver," "Chaconne," and "There Is a Time." . . . ¶ May 5 at 7:30: "Air for the G String," "The Unsung," "Day on Earth," and "There Is a Time." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.) . . . **NOTE:** A talk by Carla Maxwell, the artistic director, will follow the performance on May 3.

Lori Belilove, Deborah Carr, and Nancy Zendora—Presenting a program of historic and contemporary dance. (Good Shepherd-Faith Presbyterian Church, 152 W. 66th St. May 2-4 at 8. For reservations, call 877-3399.)

Sarah Skaggs—Presenting "Deep Song (Remix)," a full-length work for four dancers. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. May 2-4 at 8 and May 5 at 3.)

Ralph Lemon Company—Opening performances of a one-week engagement that will run through May 12. May 7 at 8: "Folk Dances Duet" (New York première), "Folk Dances Sextet" (première), and "Persephone" (première). . . . ¶ May 8 at 8: "Folk Dances Sextet," "Folk Dances Solo" (première), and "Sleep." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)



Marni Nixon

NIGHT LIFE

"PEOPLE always ask me if I resent the fact that I dubbed in my voice and didn't get any credit," Marni Nixon said recently of the musical-movie numbers she once sang for Audrey Hepburn, Natalie Wood, and Deborah Kerr, among others. "I always say that I thought I was allowing the actresses to dub in their bodies." Nixon launched her career as a "ghost" in order to subsidize her classical-music ventures. (Her first assignment, which fell in her lap while she was a messenger at M-G-M, was a Hindu lullaby for "The Secret Garden.") She hasn't dubbed a note in decades, and over the years she's seemed ambivalent about the fact that she continues to be remembered for lending her fine, precise soprano to "My Fair Lady," "West Side Story," and "The King and I" rather than for singing in Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, Russian, and German, or for recording the complete vocal works of Webern.

For better or worse, it seems likely that Nixon will always be remembered that way. Just last winter, when it was revealed that the pop-rap group Milli Vanilli did not sing its own vocals, music critics everywhere trotted out her legendary résumé to prove that there had always been ghost singers and to suggest that lip-synching wouldn't necessarily bring Western culture to its knees. "My name was bandied about," Nixon told us. "And I was happy that they thought of me. I felt like the underdog. I felt like everyone was saying, 'We like you. Come forth!' "

When we spoke to Nixon, she was in the midst of a Bermuda cruise—"I work the ships now and then," she told us—but this Sunday she'll dock at the Ballroom for a month. The engagement is her first New York cabaret appearance in years. Her program will include songs by Hoagy Carmichael, Sheldon Harnick, and Nixon's son, Andrew Gold, as well as the requisite highlights from her long-gone dubbing days. When we asked Nixon where she found new material, she gave us a sort of general "Oh, everywhere," then admitted, "I do a lot of teaching. Some of my students come in with material and, of course, if I like it I steal it immediately."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Welsh singer **IRIS WILLIAMS** can be found in the woody nook known as the Oak Room Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. The show, Ms. Williams' Gotham début, is devoted to the music of Jerome Kern. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Tuesdays through Thursdays belong to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant, where wicker baskets overflow with fruit and vegetables and a row of hams hang over the bar; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. The sly British comedian **JULIAN CLARY** is at work here Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen, as well as at seven on May 5. **MARNI NIXON** begins her monthlong engagement here with performances at three on May 5 and at seven on May 7.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. Pianist-composer **KENNY BARRON** leads an ensemble through May 4. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. **NANCY WILSON** is here April 30-May 5, and bluesman-about-town **DR. JOHN** begins a visit on May 7. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. **BLUE RODEO,** a Canadian outfit that's currently gaining momentum south of the border, is the quintessential bar band. They play tight, bright sets that alternate between Greg Keelor's brash, shit-kicking rock and Jim Cuddy's smooth, melodic, straight-ahead country. The group will be here on May 7. Other Bottom Line events: **WILL DOWNING** comes in on April 30; **QUEEN IDA** performs on May 2; and **FAIRPORT CONVENTION** plays a two-night stand May 3-4. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because once the first chord is struck, the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. Pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** leads a trio through May 4. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and **BOBBY SHORT,** who has just begun one of his long springtime stints here. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Bell-bottoms and peace signs aren't the only nostalgia craze in town: at the Cat Club on Sunday nights, the nineteen-thirties are in vogue. On other nights of the week, the club attracts a scruffy leather-and-lace crowd, but Sundays belong to the Swing Dance Society, whose passion is the Lindy Hop, a dance named after Charles Lindbergh. The dancers are young and old, graceful and flat-footed; the drink of choice is the Swing Dance Punch; the staff looks alternately bemused and bewildered by the genteel crowd. **AL COBBS'** big band runs the show on May 5. Music from eight to midnight.

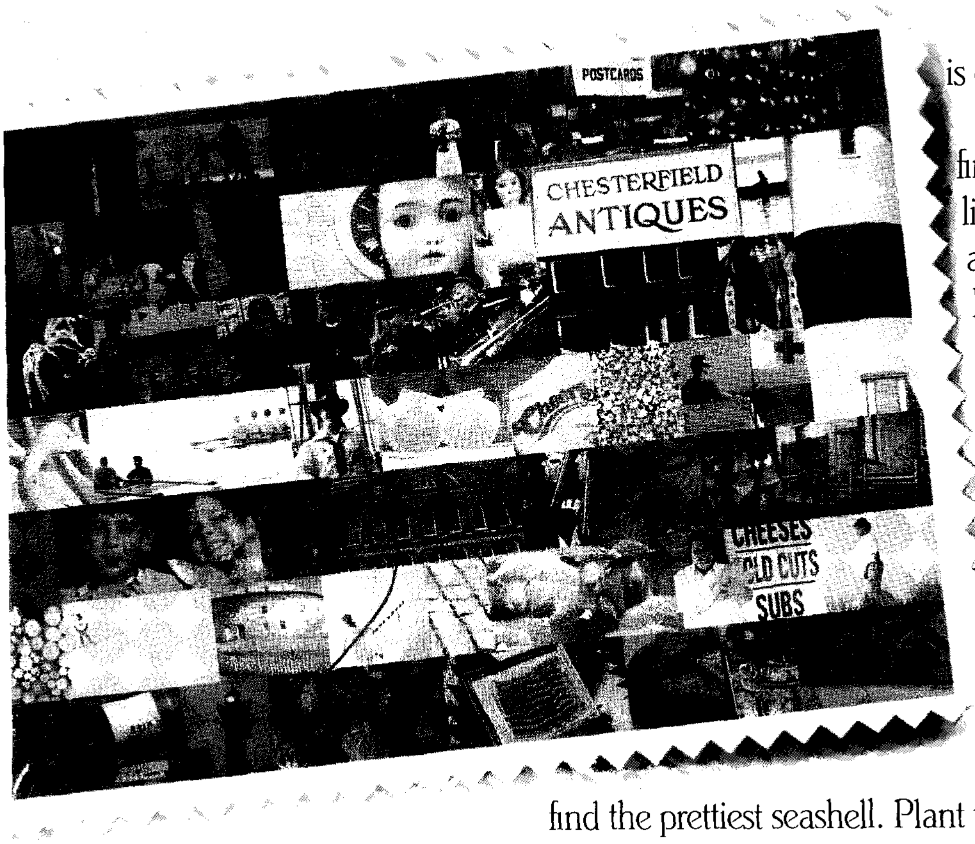
Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A snug, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. The **DAVID MURRAY** big band is here April 30-May 5; saxophonist **JIMMY HEATH** heads up a quartet as of May 7. Music after nine.

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Young, loud, and rude. N.Y.U. students like it here, as do punks, weekend punks, and anyone with a taste for rough-and-tumble garage-rock music. There's not a lot to look at—except the band and your fellow-patrons. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at ten, Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. **ASTRUD GILBERTO,** backed by a quintet, is in action April 30-May 5. For two weeks beginning May 7, the Latin-jazz pianist **MICHEL CAMILO** holds sway. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Flannery's, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—Formerly a dive bar called McCarthy's, this two-floor establishment looks as if it had been dynamited and rebuilt from the ashes up. On the ground floor is a well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features—pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports—and a couple of the near-classics: a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis. Downstairs is a low-ceilinged space that looks like a rec room; on weekends (from eleven) and Tuesdays (from nine) it's home to an enlightened mixture of garage-rock, rockabilly, surf-punk, and psychedelic-rock bands.

WHAT'S RED, WHITE, AND BLUE AND LASTS FROM MAY THROUGH OCTOBER?



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Drive up the coast to Gloucester some August evening, put on a bib (that's half the fun), and have yourself a nice, bright red lobster. Watch the sun melt the summer dew off the cranberry bogs in Plymouth. Or spend an October weekend hiking in the Berkshires.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—With jazz you get eggroll. At this posh-looking two-floor Chinese restaurant, tucked into a midtown skyscraper, you'll find a lot of businesspeople and a lot of hanging plants. In the middle of the main dining room, you'll also find trombonist **AL GREY,** for two weeks beginning April 30. Grey, who has been leading his own ensembles for some time now, built his reputation as a soloist with Count Basie's big band, an association that stretched across three decades, from the fifties to the seventies. Music from six-thirty.

Marquee, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—The current front-runner on the alternative-music scene. On May 3, **HAVANA 3 A.M.** shares the bill with **FLAT DUO JETS;** the **ROYAL CRESCENT MOB** appears on May 4.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A small-pond club for big-fish bands. There's not much to look at: it's a back-room affair with a dingy stage and a baby grand someone apparently tried to cover with papier-mâché. Still, the bookers know their college-radio playlists. The **SCREAMING TREES,** one of the best of the current crop of media-darling Seattle thrash bands, appear on May 1, with **DAS DAMEN.** On May 2, **ROYAL CRESCENT MOB** performs, and Jesus Lizard claims May 3. Shows at ten on Thursdays, and at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Where you can always smell the stogies. Jelly Roll Morton—whose business card billed him as the "creator of ragtime" and to whom is attributed the famous remark "I invented jazz in 1902"—and his Red Hot Peppers are the subject of a celebration here just now. For anyone not familiar with the pianist's work, RCA recently released a fairly exhaustive multi-disk set, and the pianist Marcus Roberts tipped his hat Morton's way a couple of times on his latest record, "Alone with Three Giants." The tribute features an instrumental septet led by pianist Terry Waldo. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays. Woody Allen plays clarinet here most Mondays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A great, pricey cabaret in the sky. The Brooklyn-born singer and actress **LAINIE KAZAN** is in the midst of an engagement here. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to Howie Wyeth's ragtime trio, Tuesdays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Fridays to Rick Hardeman's outfit, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Show times vary.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar, attached to a Tex-Mex restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos; New Mexico memorabilia; and live music nightly—country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Shows from ten-thirty.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Known for, among countless other things, a scene in "Manhattan" in which Woody Allen tries to teach his young son how to score. Last fall, after a long slumber, the Tea Room's small, red-gold-and-green cabaret reopened with a series of performances. **LEE ROY REAMS,** whose string of Broadway credits include a Tony-nominated performance in "42nd Street," will be here on May 5, at eight and, depending on demand, ten-thirty. *Dining and, of course, drinking.*

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. The Argentine tenor saxophonist **GATO BARBIERI,** who, in the seventies, was a pioneer in the fusion of Latin music and jazz, leads a group here May 1-2. Closed Sundays. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM AND EKAYA** are around for two weeks beginning April 30. Mr. Ibrahim is a South African-born flutist, saxophonist, pianist, and composer equally swayed by Monk, Ellington, gospel, and African rhythms. His arrangements rely on polyphonic melody lines—wind-and-brass chords that climb and swoop—and leave plenty of room for his accomplished soloists. An electrified big band belonging to Miles Evans is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **MARLON JORDON** quintet is at work here through May 5. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sways on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Because the Dead aren't always on tour. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. Shows from ten.

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CHECK IN

A sleazy motel has sprung up at Seventh Avenue and 17th Street. It features hairy red carpets, red velvet bedspreads, and views onto an infernal landscape, including a Sin-E-Plex and assorted capering demons. Has Manhattan truly gone to hell in a handbasket? Not quite. It's merely the work of David Sandlin, who has got hold of two windows, at Barneys New York, which will be known as the Luv-Motel until the lease runs out, on May 2. Sandlin welcomes us to his world with the signs "Hi Folks, Welcome, Sinland" and "'Satan Sheets,' Luv-Motel, Real Adult Fun, Luv Pool, Relaxation, Damnation." Two mannequins wearing Dolce & Gabbana clothing, with scarlet hair wound around pitchforks sticking out of their heads, stand at the entrance to the motel. Inside, amid various saintly and devilish images, are some trademark Sandlin touches: a Harvard Classics copy of "The Divine Comedy" with a beast painted on the cover; a blue giraffe lamp that blinks on and off; several green serpents with dogs' heads; and a blue pennant that says "Land of 1000 Beers." The likeness of the artist himself even makes several appearances—once as Orpheus, in a scene, viewed through a window, of the lyre player and Eurydice escaping a modern motel hell. A clock in the motel window reads 11:32; according to the artist, that's what James Joyce, in "Finnegans Wake," fixes as the moment of the Fall. Or maybe it's just checkout time.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

New Yorkers don't want to be prejudiced when they go to the boonies. They just can't help themselves. Like calling Charlotte, North Carolina, the boonies. How disconcerting to find that the city's nearly four hundred thousand people don't live in lean-tos. Cesar Pelli designed Charlotte's newest office tower, which, when it's completed next year, will rise sixty stories in the midst of a no-dust-on-me downtown. When Charlotte converted a church into a multipurpose theatre, nobody screamed blasphemy, the way some New Yorkers did when a deconsecrated church on Sixth Avenue opened as Limelight. True, North Carolinians elected Jesse Helms and can't watch Robin Byrd, but we have the Gambino family, mothers picketing against contraception dissemination in schools—and they get twenty more channels than we do.

Ah, but what do the kids do at night? Listen to the Grand Ole Opry or watch "Hee Haw" with Pa? Not exactly. They listen to a rock-and-roll band do pretty O.K. Elvis covers at the Artist's Café, go to Pterodactyl and dance to better music than anyone who frequents the Roxy ever does, or—our hosts' preference—carry on at Park Elevator, which is not next to a park and doesn't contain an elevator. (It's named after its erstwhile location and is located in a low-slung warehouse in an untransformed part of town.) Walk right in. It's two dollars for members, three dollars for guests, and for a dollar they check your coat as they give you your admission ticket. When we got there, they were just finishing up a fashion show featuring clothes from Trash & Vaudeville (on St. Marks Place). The crowd was partly straight, partly preppy, partly retro, partly gay, partly black, partly coupled, partly acid-washed, partly tattooed, partly cuffed, partly leathered, partly prommed (it's the season down there already, with a majority of the girls in pageant-winning strapless lamé). There's no eighteen-dollar admission charge. No limitless line for a three-dollar coat check. No sexually, racially, or socially segregated dance floor. And when you leave, your car looks the same as it did when you arrived, and the attendant says, "Thanks for coming." "Sorry it isn't New York," said one regular in the parking lot. No, it's not.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Cirque du Soleil—Aerialists, clowns, jugglers, and contortionists *avec une différence.* (Battery Park City. Through May 19. For information, call 509-5550.)

1991 Tour of World Figure-Skating Champions—Jill Trenary, Peggy Fleming, Christopher Bowman, and many others. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. May 5 at 3.)

"Black Works"—A performance work by the London-based group Station House Opera. Seven performers walk around on a flour-covered floor, making various random gestures. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. May 1-4 at 8:30.)

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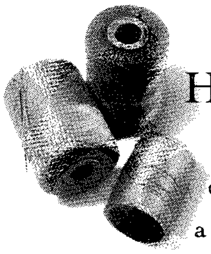

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ART

THE *cover of the charming square* green booklet that accompanies William N. Copley's new show of paintings (at Phyllis Kind, 136 Greene Street; through May 15) features the embossed black shapes of an umbrella and of a hat that is a cross between a bowler and a boater. It's a hat that is simultaneously grown-up/uptight and youthful/carefree, and is, to an extent, even female as well as male. It's a hat, for instance, that could easily belong to all the avuncular interlopers, secret-lifers, and small-town perverts of the modern age—rainy-day men like Walter Mitty, René Magritte, Charles Chaplin, and Hercule Poirot; guys on twisted leashes in great big towns. A few avatars of benign womanly deviants creep under it, too, however. Mary Poppins is first among equals in such a group, and the embossed hat in fact most closely resembles hers. Then comes Sally Bowles, the one and only, followed by the composite silhouette of every girl-about-town from east of the Rhine to have visited New York since the movie version of "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" was released.

This book cover definitely fits its subject well. Copley—to woman born, in 1919—is better known by his signature device: CPLY. The artist claims that this distinguishes him from the eighteenth-century Copley, but there is reason to suspect that it's simply an abbreviation for anything that has to do with copulation. This angel of mercy for the priapically inclined has indeed been spinning his very own personal satyricon into a sugar-coated yet salubrious yarn. The painting "Trust Lust," of a dapper little man dancing with a big buxom nude, on a flowered rug in a flower-papered room, is but one such savory parable. Copley's potions are derived from herbs from the gardens of rococo, Pop, and Surrealism.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"The Sculpture of Indonesia" includes more than a hundred and thirty-five bronzes, life-size stone sculptures, and ceremonial objects dating from the eighth century to the fifteenth. . . . ¶ A large exhibition of paintings, drawings, and etchings by Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863). Also on view is a previously unpublished sketchbook from Delacroix's 1828 trip to Touraine. Through June 16. . . . ¶ "The Fauve Landscape" brings together nearly a hundred and twenty-five paintings made between 1904 and 1908 by Derain, Matisse, Braque, and their circle of friends. Through May 19. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

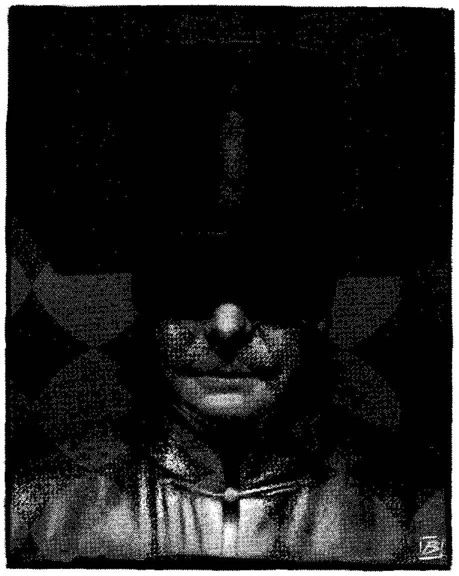
Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Air," a thirty-two-foot-long stainless-steel fabric sculpture by Kyoko Kumai, is the latest installation in the museum's "Projects" series. Starts May 3. . . . ¶ "Ben Franklin Dreams the New World," a video installation by Peter Rose. Through May 12. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The Biennial: work by artists whose stars began to rise in the fifties and sixties is on the second floor; work by artists who emerged in the seventies and eighties is on the third floor; and work by late-eighties and nineties artists is on the fourth floor. The "AIDS Timeline," by Group Material, is in the lobby. Through June 16. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Leon Golub's first three-dimensional installation, titled "WorldWide," employs photographic details from his wall-size canvases, reproduced onto transparent sheets of plastic. Through June 16. . . . ¶ "Albert Bierstadt." Appropriately subtitled "Art & Enterprise," this show—the first major Bierstadt exhibition in twenty years—is good old vulgar entertainment. This German-born, more or less self-taught late-Hudson River School artist (1830-1902) was an inspired stuntman-painter who relied on a grab bag of compositional and technical tricks to convey his visions of Manifest Destiny. Most often, this means anecdotal scenes and incidental details (dot-and-daub work) in the foreground, with broad and woozy strokes for mountains above and beyond. Through May 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show that examines the ecosystems of tropical rain forests around the world, such as those in the Congo basin, the Amazon basin, Madagascar, and Borneo. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 9.)



James Lee Byars

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—An exhibition focussing on one painting: an early Choson-dynasty (1392-1910) Korean Buddhist triad depicting Sakyamuni with two attending bodhisattvas. Also on view are sixty related paintings and sculptures. Through July 28. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"The Nearest Edge of the World," an exhibition of works in several mediums by nine contemporary artists from Cuba. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Forty-one examples of ancient Chinese bronze vessels, weapons, and personal ornaments ranging from the Erlitou era (nineteenth century B.C.) to the Han dynasty (third century A.D.). Through June 15. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The museum's collection—begun in 1896 by the three Hewitt sisters, Amy, Eleanor, and Sarah—is ably represented by "A Design Resource," a show of seven hundred objects. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—"From Pontormo to Seurat," a show of sixty-one drawings from the Art Institute of Chicago, including works by Gainsborough, Géricault, Redon, Delacroix, and Degas. Through July 7. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A hundred and six examples of contemporary American bookbinding by such artists as Donald Glaister, Deborah Evetts, and Michael Wilcox. Through June 6. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Academy's "Annual Exhibition" includes more than a hundred and fifty paintings, sculptures, drawings, and watercolors. Through May 12. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A show of fifty paintings, drawings, photographs, and decorative objects that were collected by Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919). Starts May 2. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Kingdoms of Land, Sea, and Sky" includes a hundred and eighty zoological woodcuts, engravings, and watercolors by artists and naturalists such as Albrecht Dürer, John James Audubon, Edward Lear, and Maria Sibylla Merian. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ Sixty-three prints by Reginald Marsh (1898-1954), depicting New York scenes from the twenties and thirties. Through June 29. (Third Floor Gallery. Open Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88), one of the twentieth century's singular talents, designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his sculptures. It contains a wide range of his work—from the early surrealistic biomorphic sculptures to several types of stone carvings—and documentation of his prodigious public art. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with the artist's works. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of works by Romare Bearden (1912-88), which includes a hundred and forty-one oils, collages, and watercolors. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

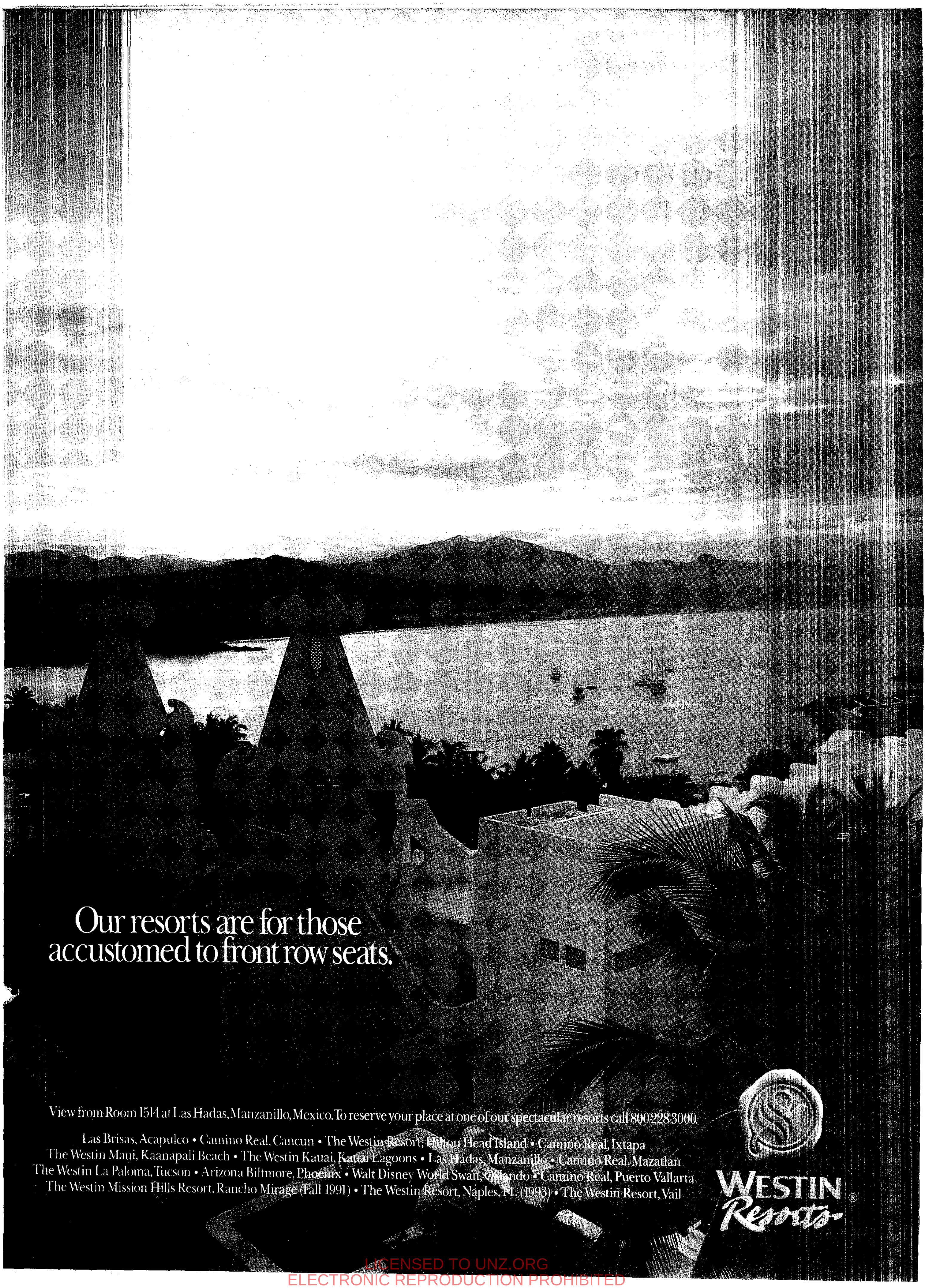
GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

James Lee Byars—A group of sculptures on pedestals, in blue African granite—a sort of lower-grade lapis lazuli that to the 1991 eye is apt to seem quite Trumpish. Their shapes evoke the letters of a cosmic alphabet, without seeming to have a specific meaning or karma. Byars, it would seem, is keyed into post-hippie aristocrats, latter-day northern-European spiritualists, and other New Age garden-club types. Through May 18. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St.)

David Salle—This is sort of his Old Master show. Salle's palette, always febrile, is now full of Greuze greiges, sickly High Mannerist yellows, poignantly hollow slate blues. The background of each of these large paintings is a lightly traced, brushed-up reproduction of some connoisseurish Old World thing. Over these scenes and pastorales Salle imposes his skittish and voluble imagery. The photo-silk-screened inset is an effectively disruptive new device. In "Hamlet Mind," for instance, the masterwork of the show, a photographic inset of a shrouded shape—a woman in purdah, perhaps—seems an icon of perversity in relation to its more commonly fetishistic counterpart, a painted image of two women in Pierrot costumes, looking scared, as if faced with a disapproving master. There are all kinds of strange bondage metaphors in the kinky middle distance of these paintings, where literal-minded feminists had best not prowl. Once again Salle-ome performs his old dance of the veils—that *nouvelle-vague* ballet of mid-thought weirdness, where love slaves beckon and subjects are sometimes loath to reveal their sources, their forms, and, on occasion, their names as well. Through May 4. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

"Artists' Sketchbooks"—Lying flat in spare cases are an intriguing and varied assortment of cahiers, notepads, workbooks, and folders that were once the very private property of some twenty-four artists. Their names suggest an impressive if rather clubbish agenda spanning Abstract Expressionism to the pres-



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REVAMPED

Somebody let Donald Lipski's all-white sculpture unravel in a filthy parking lot, so he renamed it "Dirt Ball" and notified the Whitney Museum. The work, which weighs four thousand pounds and measures eleven feet in diameter, has recently been installed in the museum's outdoor sculpture court, to the left of the entrance. "I've created a new work, just as Delacroix would paint on the back of a canvas," Mr. Lipski said. The original work—a ball made of an entangled mile of two-inch-thick rope—was composed last year for the National Garden Festival, in Gateshead, England. The festival people sent the ball back to Mr. Lipski, in Queens, unwound and smudged. Operating on the if-you-can't-beat-'em principle, he reconstructed the ball in another parking lot, with the help of ten assistants and a pickup. He also added five hundred leather straps, with buckles, for no particular reason. The ball was then hauled by flatbed truck (the driver had to get a permit for an oversized load) to the Whitney. Although "Dirt Ball" looks ratty from every side, Mr. Lipski carefully directed the movement of the crane that lifted it from truck to platform. "It was like arranging flowers," he said. "Dirt Ball" will be on view, becoming grimier by the day, through June 16. Cleaner works by Mr. Lipski—made of such items as fifty pounds of green rubber bands and a Leica camera dipped in wax—can be seen at the Hudson River Museum, in Yonkers, through June 30.

ent, from Myron Stout to John Chamberlain to Richmond Burton, with Louise Bourgeois taking her frequent missionary's position as lone matriarch. Through May 4. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

SHORT LIST—**VARUJAN BOGHOSIAN,** Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through May 26); **JEAN DUBUFFET,** Elkon, 18 E. 81st St. (through June 8); **NATHAN OLIVEIRA,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through May 8); **MARINA STERN,** Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through May 11).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

IVAN CHERMAYEFF—Extremely competent and cheery collages by the noted designer. All of them depict visages—people's, dogs', and cats'—and most attest to the artist's intercontinental life, displaying hotel labels gathered from trips abroad and envelopes sent to his various homes from such foreign lands as Japan and Poland. Through May 4. (Ulysses, 41 E. 57th St.)

SUE COE—A retrospective, mostly of nineteen-eighties work. It is interesting and extremely surprising to learn that David Hockney was an important early influence for this London-born, New York-based artist. Coe's politically fierce, classically Expressionistic oeuvre has precious little to do with sunshine and easy living. Cruelty and greed, in their most institutionalized forms, are her perennial themes. "Porkopolis," for instance, a gigantic series from 1989, is an unforgettable exposé of the meat industry's more sadistic practices. Coe was trained as a graphic artist, and she is still at her best on paper rather than on canvas. No matter. She is one of the most vivid and effective artists at work today. Through May 4. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

LEO COPERS—Punny pieces, with a sense of theatre, by a mid-career Belgian artist. The least resonant of the works are those that are the most overstated, referring directly to art-making: one consists of knives that come perilously close to slashing canvases labelled "Important Paintings," another is an old-fashioned machine gun surrounded by silk-pillow "sandbags" and pointed directly at the viewer. Two pieces that have more allegorical and metaphoric links to art are pure poetry. In one, a sword is encased in a huge chunk of ice that's housed within an iron lung of a refrigerator; in the other, a wing—perhaps that of an angel—is made of rainbow-colored feathers. Both refer to caged creativity, of the hand and of the spirit. Through May 4. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

SHORT LIST—**NICHOLAS AFRICANO,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through May 25); **GEORGE CONDO,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through May 24); **HELEN FRANKENTHALER,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 11); **SIDNEY GOODMAN,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through May 11); **SHEILA ISHAM,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through May 4); **JOHN MARIN** and **CHARLES BURCHFIELD,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through May 25); **KENZO OKADA,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 4); **ANTONI TÀPIES,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through May 25); **MICHAEL TETHEROW,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 1).

GALLERIES—SoHo

JACKIE FERRARA—It has been nearly five years since Ferrara has exhibited in New York, and, as these three very beautiful sculptures attest, the wait has been too long. As always, each work is a variation on a pyramid and is made of delicately stacked lengths of wood. Here the wood is poplar, with stained sections of sandstone red or gray. These quietly intelligent and architecturally suggestive works are built on a scale somewhere between buildings and models. Through May 18. (Klein, 594 Broadway.)

ROBERT GROSVENOR—Two huge architectural sculptures. One is a concrete-block "warehouse" with a low, corrugated-metal roof; the other is a Plexiglas canopied pavilion, housing a minimalist sculpture. Both exhibit strong figurative references and an almost incidental relationship to their material. Through May 4. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

MARY HEILMANN—Recent abstract paintings. This plentiful show is energetic and clear-headed. Many of the works on view are highly distilled seascapes and beachscapes—original in flavor, even though in part derived from Mondrian, Diebenkorn, and Al Held—and they seem to join forces to herald the picnic season. Heilmann's work may be commonsensical when it comes to gesture and materials, but it also conveys a certain subtle largesse: the combined attributes, in short, of great California cooking. She is, quite possibly, the Alice Waters of contemporary American art. Through May 18. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

MARLENE MCCARTY—A powerful first solo show of three works, made up of thirty-four raw canvases butted edge to edge, with a single strip of words running continuously across the center. In one piece, called "Crash," the strip resembles a stripe on a towel, and the words mimic offensive car-culture lingo about women as sex machines ("She's an engine eatin' pit of destruction," "6000 pounds of thrust," and "Bend over I'll drive"). "Burn," in which the strip looks like a tire track, is all about the machismo of war. Through May 11. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

ELIE NADELMAN (1882-1946)—This Polish-born artist has always been considered an American, but the many drawings in this show, roughly half of which were made before he emigrated here, make his roots in European modernism—and particularly Cubism—quite clear. The show also includes three exquisite bronze sculptures. Through May 11. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

JOHN NEWMAN—A very handsome show of drawings by a sculptor who is perhaps better in this medium. The drawings depict eccentric biomorphic forms, many of which loop back into themselves and are either joined in corkscrew or bellows shapes, or broken into frayed strands or mercurial beads. Newman's skills are considerable and his use of color is exquisite, and in these works he shows himself to be a bit of a male Elizabeth Murray. But they seem to lack the sense of struggle that has contributed significantly to the strength of his earlier drawings; they seem marred by peacock pride. Through May 11. (Nolan, 560 Broadway.)

RONA PONDICK—This artist's creepy, body-obsessed sculptures look much more interesting in a controlled, dramatically lit gallery environment than at the entry to the fourth floor of the Whitney Biennial, where they look somewhat silly. Pondick fetishizes details of the body in what must be considered an homage to Louise Bourgeois; but, unlike the modern master's work, hers seems tinged with guilt and horrification. Some pieces are very Morticia-like—for example, a mini love seat covered in undergarment lace with mismatched patent-leather shoes for feet. A piece consisting of five hundred little pink plastic balls with yellowed sets of human-looking teeth seems intended to spoof the sentimentality of Renoir, but it has the opposite effect. Through May 4. (Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St.)

RICHARD PRINCE—For the past decade and a half, Prince has enacted a particularly potent social terrorism with an art rooted in conceptual strategies. Known initially for appropriated photographs, primarily from advertising, that commodified gesture and desire, in recent years he has created paintings that conduct an often fascinating inquiry into the relevance of the medium. The six recent, large-scale paintings on display in this show are by far his most complex. They take on aspects of postwar painting—from the heroic scale of AbEx through the cartoonery of Pop to the geometric structure of minimalism—and, more specifically, an array of individuals, in particular Rothko, Rauschenberg, Polke, and Halley. Not only are the works historically inclusive, but they also refer to Prince's own history, in that they contain an amalgam of images and techniques utilized in his past paintings. While these works are endlessly skillful, they also convey an underlying sense that painting has lost its efficacy; they are as much ghosts of painting as Prince's photographs were ghosts of photography. This quality is the source of the artist's strength. Through May 11. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

TONY TASSET / B. WURTZ—Tasset's love of the well-crafted object peeks through this oddly stately show of art works made of packaging materials: a wood pallet and a ball of corrugated cardboard on a corrugated pedestal, for example. On the floor, near a wall, lies a wrinkled drop cloth that looks casually tossed but is in fact artfully arranged. / Wurtz wanders along boring domestic tangents in this show. Among the works on display are childish constructions of pieces of clothing stuck in wall-mounted aluminum cans, accompanied by texts such as "Don't look at art. Look at the world," and a wall full of aluminum pie tins painted in pretty colors, as if made on a rainy afternoon at day camp. Through May 4. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

JOAN WALLACE—Paintings by half of the now defunct Wallace & Donohue team. They are anti-formalist and anti-patriarchal, and each has a twist or two. A painting of a woman's profile made up of Frank Stella pinstripes is actually an adaptation of a Sherrie Levine collage. The painting is on horizontal panels, which slide open to reveal a blowup of a Robert Morris portrait of himself in S & M garb. This loaded juxtaposition of images deals with the struggle between form and content, the art system and its subversion, and the title—"Bob's Your Uncle"—is a naughty insider joke about patriarchy and authorship. Despite a certain cleverness, however, this piece, like the others in the show, is essentially a nonartist's art. Through May 11. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

H. C. WESTERMANN (1922-81)—Drawings and prints by the father of American regionalist surreal funky figuration. Although this is not the best selection one could gather, don't worry: there's no such thing as a pedestrian Westermann. Through May 11. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

"PICASSO'S 'PARADE' FROM PAPER TO STAGE"—"Parade" (1917) was a historic and controversial ballet with a score by Satie, a libretto by Cocteau, choreography by Massine, and costumes and sets by Picasso. This small but thorough exhibition includes virtually all of the artist's preparatory drawings, which reveal a more technical Picasso than that of his "art" drawings. The curtain for "Parade," on display in photographic form, was fifty-five feet long, constituting Picasso's largest painting. The costumes, principally the three Cubist constructions for the Managers (also represented in photographs), are some of the artist's most inventive sculptures. Also on view is Satie's luscious handwritten score. Through June 13. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Open Wednesdays until 8.)

"Show of Strength"—Proceeds from this exhibition of works by prominent living American women artists will benefit MADRE, a broad-based and ecumenical organization dedicated to the cause of world peace, although it opposes the use of coercion or repression of any kind in order to keep it. Participating artists include Judy Chicago, April Gornik, Nancy Graves, Jenny Holzer, and Marisol—an interestingly eclectic group, to say the least. Through May 4. (Plumb, 81 Greene St. Open daily.)

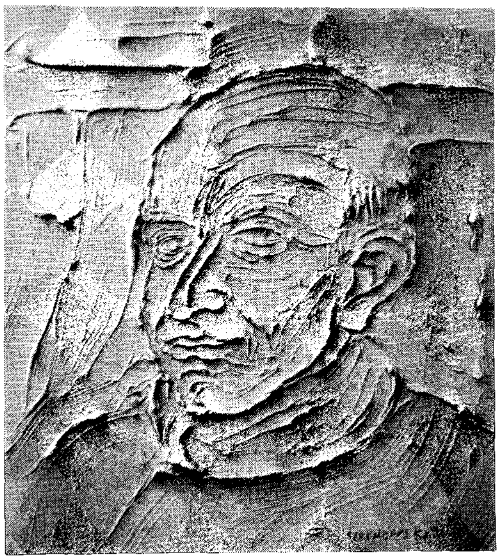
Group Show—An exhibition of drawings by nineteen women, including Louise Bourgeois, Jane Kaplowitz, Judy Pfaff, Kiki Smith, Joan Jonas, Joan Mitchell, Ellen Phelan, Elyn Zimmerman, Susan Rothenberg, Jane Hammond, and Elizabeth Murray. No theme has been declared here, and yet all of these works suggest certain shared characteristics: an offhand, whimsical, or humorous approach, and an idiom at once figurative and abstract. It's a surprisingly coherent and pleasant show. Through May 30. (GuidArte, 379 West Broadway.)

Short List—**JOHN M. ARMLEDER,** Newburg, 580 Broadway (through May 11), and Gibson, 568 Broadway (through May 18); **ROBERT BEAUCHAMP,** M-13, at 72 Greene St. (through May 18); **HOWARD BEN TRÉ,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through May 25); **ERNEST BRIGGS** and **EDWARD DUGMORE,** Shapolsky, 99 Spring St. (through May 25); **PAUL BOWEN,** Shainman, 560 Broadway (through May 18); **STANLEY BOXER,** Dorsky, 578 Broadway (through May 11); **CHRISTIAN ECKART,** RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (through May 18); **SAM GILLIAM,** Fendrick, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St. (through May 25); **EVA HESSE,** SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St. (through May 22); **PAUL JENKINS,** Gimpel, 415 West Broadway (through May 18); **BERTRAND LAVIER,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through May 4); **ROBERT LOBE,** Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St. (through June 8); **SAM MESSER,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (through May 25); **GEORGE RICKEY,** Davidson, 415 West Broadway (through June 8); **LORNA SIMPSON** and **KEVIN CARTER,** Baer, 476 Broome St. (through May 18); **JOSEPH STELLA** and **MILTON AVERY,** Snyder, 588 Broadway (through May 25); **SELINA TRIEFF,** Perlow, 560 Broadway (through May 25); **CLEMENS WEISS,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through May 25); **THOMAS WOODRUFF,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through May 25).

OTHER GALLERIES

"Interrogating Identity"—Another politically correct exhibition with works of wildly varying interest. Unlike similar shows, this is not one in which the context is more interesting than the work. Featured are artists from the United States, Canada, and England who are members of minorities, principally blacks, Native Americans, and Arabs. Whitfield Lovell's large drawings of clothes with allegorical renderings atop them and Albert Chong's shamanistic tableaux of chairs decorated with shells, feathers, coconuts, and dreadlocks address the idea of portraiture in the broadest sense of the word. Racial dichotomies are expressed articulately by Ingrid Pollard, in a photo-and-text work that discusses the alienation of English blacks from the British countryside, and by Glenn Ligon, in a word painting that describes the dilemma of a black artist using a white vocabulary. A few of the works are so universal in their appeal that the issue of racial or ethnic identity drops away. Such is the case with Lani Maestro's paintings on fabric of an ear, a hand, a grid of eyes, and a screaming mouth, accompanied by a handwritten poem about a despotic general who likes to display the body parts of his victims. The paintings are chilling by themselves and do not need the text to convey their meaning. Through May 18. (Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl.)

"Kulcher Queen and Kulcher Books"—An exhibition of more than forty books and magazines that Lita Hornick published through the Kulcher Press, including "Screen Tests," by Gerard Malanga and Andy Warhol, and "Interlocking Lives," by Alex Katz and Kenneth Koch. Through June 28. (Butler Library, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Open Mondays through Fridays 9 to 4:45.)



Bertrand Lavier

PHOTOGRAPHY

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG's photography exhibition at Pace-MacGill (32 East 57th Street; through May 4) is a cram course in the possibilities of the medium. The show is also further proof of Rauschenberg's ability to stretch as an artist. There are works here that conform to what one might expect to see at a Rauschenberg photography exhibition—pictures that are made up of serial imagery and combinations of details—but there are also plain old photographs. The latter were done in the late forties and early fifties, and they're heaven. There's a portrait of the painter Cy Twombly, taken in Rome in 1952, that's very resonant in light of this American artist's lifework, most of which was produced in Italy. And there's a quiet photograph taken at Black Mountain College in 1949, of two chairs with sunlight streaming down on them, that's as good a representation of the idealistic spirit of that place as any image we've ever seen.

The exhibition also includes impressive color photographs that Rauschenberg did in the early eighties. Our favorite is a still-life of bottles. The picture has obvious connections to Pop art, but it's more than just a footnote to Rauschenberg's past. It's an orchestration of color and pattern, and a piece of subtle humor.

Joan Fontcuberta—A double show, by an impressive youngish Catalan artist, of photographs that have been somewhat mysteriously altered, yet somehow not poetically "violated." At Zabriskie (724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St., open Mondays; through May 22) there are photograms on, for example, hand-painted cloth, wallpaper, and an "Andalusian Fan." Collectively titled "Paper Gardens," the works suggest costume archives and period rooms, and seem to have been issued by some genteel society for Proustian cryogenics. At Lieberman & Saul (155 Spring St.; through May 15) are pictures more like traditional grotesques, the kind of thing the artist was first noted for. Fontcuberta's work is at once baroque, straightforward, and subtly quite beautiful.

Eikoh Hosoe—This artist lives in Tokyo and is not generally known here, but he has been an influential photographer in Japan for decades. This show concentrates on his nudes from 1969 to 1971, and while the work is not as dramatic as some of his other pictures, its purity comes across with strong impact. Hosoe juggles figuration and abstraction expertly, and he achieves a sculptural quality through his use of graphic elements, like cropping, toning, and highlighting. These small, intimate works are reminiscent of the nudes of Bill Brandt and of Robert Mapplethorpe—and the echoes enhance their effect. The show adds up to a powerful meditation on repetition and difference. Through May 4. (Photofind, 138 Spring St. . . . ¶ A retrospective of Hosoe's work is at the International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8. Through May 26.)

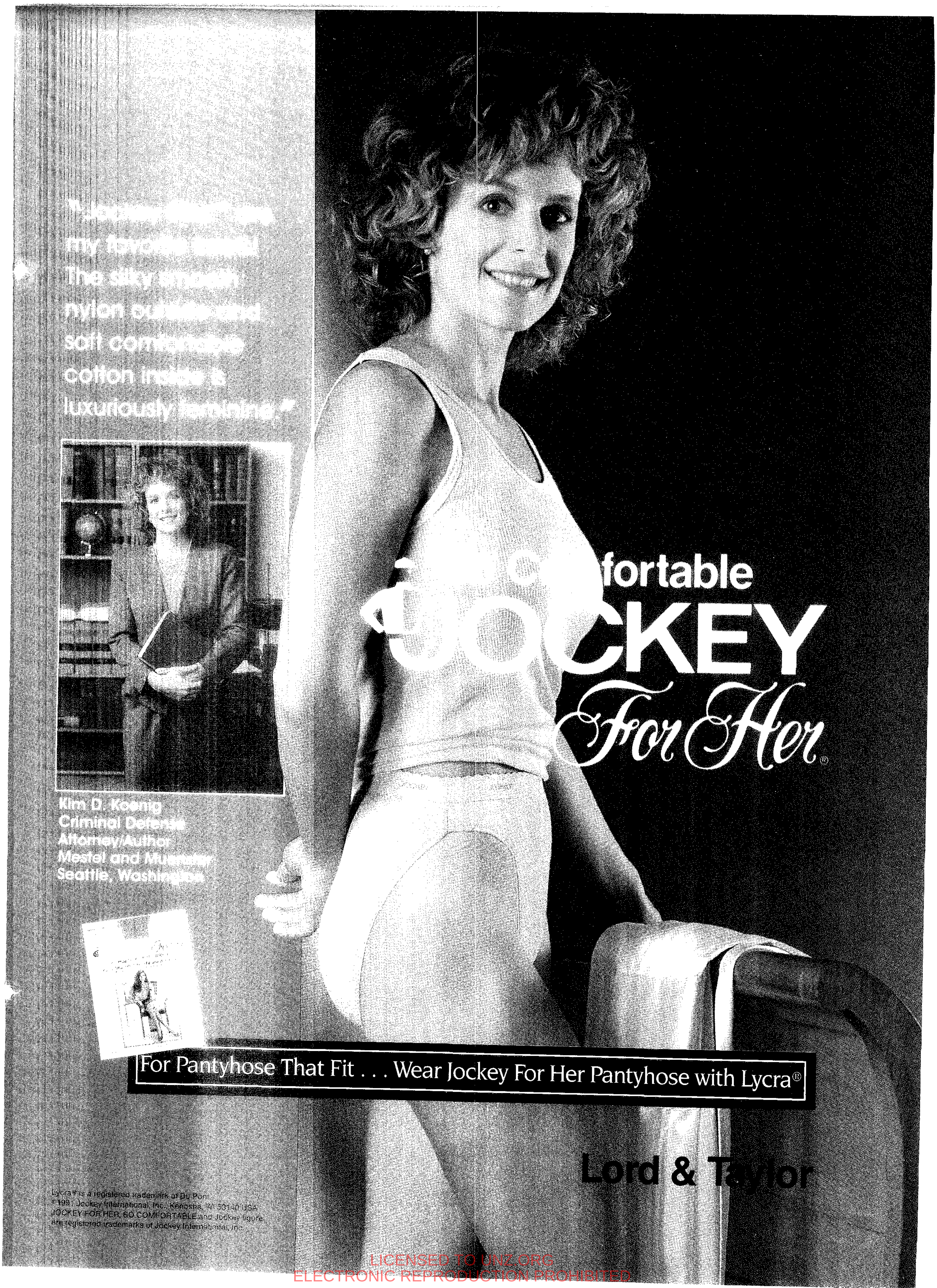
"Photoprojects"—New works in various formats by several young artists, including Richard Rothman, Anne Barnard, Maria Martinez-Cañas, and Dick Schlefer. Through May 19. (White Columns, 154 Christopher St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Short List—**BRUCE BARNBAUM** and **KAREN HALVERSON,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through May 25); **ANNIE LEIBOVITZ,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through May 4); **DAVID LEVINTHAL** and **EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through May 25); **EL LISSITZKY** and **EDWARD QUIGLEY,** Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. (through June 1); **ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 18); **SEBASTIÃO SALGADO,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6; through June 11); **BERNAR VENET,** Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (opens at noon on Saturdays, through May 18); **JAMES WELLING,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. (through May 4).

MUSIC

SO Van Cliburn is to return at last to the stage of Carnegie Hall! We heard through the grapevine that the Carnegie administration, for whose centennial festival the prodigal pianist's *rentrée* is a coup, was miffed when he came as close as the Tilles Center, on Long Island, earlier this season, provoking a review in the *Times* and, so it was apparently felt, taking a bit of the edge off the curiosity over the May 1 concert. The curiosity is considerable in our age of personality consumption; a fallen hero, a Great Man who turned out to have Problems Just Like The Rest Of Us, Van Cliburn became even more interesting to a certain kind of star follower when he stopped playing (not quite to the degree that Maria Callas did when she stopped singing, but the pattern was the same, and, after all, Mr. Cliburn didn't get involved with anyone named Onassis).

But never mind all this: Mr. Cliburn was—and, we all hope, still is—a pianist of genuine attainments. Many in the musical public understood this without the help of hype; we join them in welcoming him back. And what will he play? The Tchaikovsky concerto, what else? Actually, it was a version of that last question that led to Mr. Cliburn's problems. When he won the Tchaikovsky competition back in 1958, the nation found a folk hero and the music critics found a pianist with a very narrow effective repertory. In a short list of Romantic concertos and an even smaller selection of recital literature, he was, we think, an authentically beautiful artist. He played with ample technique, simplicity of expres-



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sion, unaffected soulfulness. His performances were exciting and sentimental. Certain intellectual and emotional facets of the piano repertory clearly did not engage him as they did some others. A few generations earlier, it was perfectly possible for Josef Hofmann, Paderewski, or, for that matter, Horowitz to have a similarly restricted range, especially in the concerto department. We do not mean to put Mr. Cliburn in a category with these three; they played more interestingly than he. But they came of age in a time when a Romantically inclined virtuoso pianist was expected to play interestingly and was supported in so doing; Mr. Cliburn came of age at the lowest ebb of intellectual respect for Romantic music and of critical tolerance for the kind of artist he was. Instead of developing, he contracted. Inner limitations, or hostile atmosphere? The atmosphere, at least, has changed somewhat; now we will see whether Mr. Cliburn can pick up the pieces and pursue his career.

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440.)

OPERA

MEASURED BREATHS THEATRE COMPANY—Presenting a staged realization by Robert Press of Monteverdi's "Madrigals of Love and War," sung in English and set in the present; with Roberto Pace conducting an eleven-member cast and a seven-piece early-instrument ensemble. (Gene Frankel Theatre, 24 Bond St. May 3-6 at 8. Through May 13. For information about tickets, call 334-8402.)

BAM OPERA—Presenting the New York première of "Hydrogen Jukebox," with music by Philip Glass to poetry by Allen Ginsberg. Staged by Ann Carlson, designed by Jerome Sirlin, and conducted by Martin Goldray. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. May 7 at 7 and May 8 at 8. Through May 12.)

INDIANA UNIVERSITY OPERA THEATRE—Presenting a fully staged production of Mozart's "La Finta Giardiniera," sung in English, and conducted by Brian Balkwill. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. 874-7515. May 8 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Yuri Temirkanov conducts Borodin's "Prince Igor" Overture, Sibelius's Second Symphony, and Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto, with pianist André Watts. (Carnegie Hall. April 29 at 8.)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Zubin Mehta conducts Mahler's First Symphony and Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, featuring Van Cliburn in a rare appearance. (Carnegie Hall. May 1 at 8.)

LITTLE ORCHESTRA SOCIETY—Soprano Erie Mills and violinist Chee-Yun are featured soloists in an all-Vivaldi concert conducted by Dino Anagnost. (Alice Tully Hall. May 1 at 8.)

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA—Christoph von Dohnányi conducts Dvořák's Ninth Symphony ("From the New World"), the première of Schnittke's Concerto Grosso No. 5, and Shostakovich's Second Violin Concerto, with Gidon Kremer as soloist. (Carnegie Hall. May 2 at 8.) . . . *NOTE: Mr. Schnittke will participate in a pre-concert discussion of his new work, open to ticket-holders, beginning at 6:45, in the Café Carnegie (on the hall's parquet level).*

METROPOLITAN OPERA ORCHESTRA—James Levine conducts orchestral music by Berg and Strauss, and soprano Jessye Norman is featured in Beethoven's scena "Ah, perfido!" and Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene from Wagner's "Götterdämmerung." (Carnegie Hall. May 3 at 8.)

CARNEGIE HALL CENTENNIAL CONCERTS—Carnegie Hall opened its doors to the public on May 5, 1891, with a concert that included a guest appearance by composer-conductor Peter Illich Tchaikovsky. A hundred years later—to the day—the hall marks its centennial with a pair of concerts featuring luminary soloists, the New York Choral Artists, and the New York Philharmonic, conducted by James Levine and Zubin Mehta. May 5 at 4: The première of Joan Tower's "Third Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman," commissioned for the event, as well as guest appearances by pianist Alfred Brendel; cellist Mstislav Rostropovich; singers Placido Domingo, Marilyn Horne, and Samuel Ramey; and the Empire Brass. . . . ¶ May 5 at 9: The orchestra and chorus are joined by cellist Yo-Yo Ma, violinists Midori and Isaac Stern, soprano Leontyne Price, violist Pinchas Zukerman, and the Empire Brass.

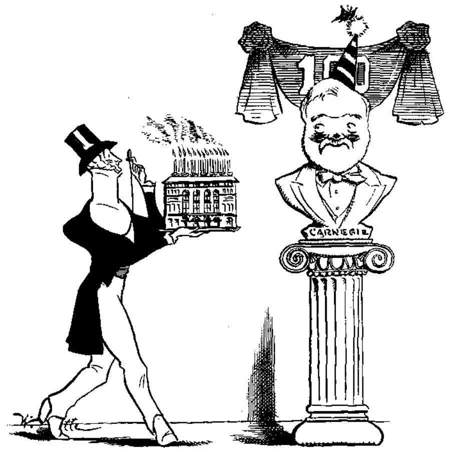
MUSIC FROM SUMMERFEST—Robert Kapilow conducts the Rutgers Festival Orchestra in symphonies and piano concertos by Johann Christian Bach and Mozart, who acknowledged a strong stylistic debt to "the English Bach." Featuring pianist Ilana Vered. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 7 at 8.)

RIVERSIDE CHORAL SOCIETY—Patrick Gardner directs Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" and Ariel Sanchez's "Misa Criolla," among other works. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. May 3 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

NEW YORK CITY GAY MEN'S CHAMBER CHOIR—Dean X Johnson directs the nineteen-member ensemble in works by Byrd, Mendelssohn, and Vaughan Williams, as well as premières of works by three of the group's members. Philene Wannelle, the mesmerizing mezzo of La Gran Scena Opera Company, is featured in, among other pieces, the 1891 hit song "Ta-ra-ra-boom-der-é." (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. May 4 at 3. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Y CHORALE—Amy Kaiser directs the première of Robert Starer's "Proverbs for a Son," as well as music by Johann Hermann Schein, Melchior Franck, and others. (92nd Street Y. May 4 at 8.)

CARNEGIE HALL CENTENNIAL CHORALFEST—Robert Shaw directs the American Symphony Orchestra and seven of New York's leading choral ensembles in a "Centennial Songfest," which will include familiar works by Bach, Handel, Mozart, Berlioz, Mendelssohn, and Brahms. (Carnegie Hall. May 5 at 12:15.) . . . **NOTE:** Choral aficionados who are not members of the participating choirs may also take part in the performance, provided they show up at Carnegie Hall for a rehearsal with maestro Shaw beginning at 9 A.M. For free concert and rehearsal tickets, which are required, call 247-7800.



ORATORIO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK—Andrew Carnegie had his "Music Hall" built in large part to provide a worthy concert venue for the Oratorio Society, which until then had contented itself with performing in the showrooms of a piano manufacturer. In the hall's opening concert, the Society performed Berlioz's Te Deum. To celebrate its hundredth season of performances in Carnegie Hall, the Oratorio Society (augmented by the Boys Choir of Harlem) reprises the Berlioz work, and also performs Poulenc's Gloria and the première of a cantata by Ivan Tcherepnin. Lyndon Woodside directs. With soprano Benita Valente and tenor David Britton. (Carnegie Hall. May 8 at 8.)

AMERICAN BOYCHOIR—James Litton directs the choir, augmented by the Albemarle Consort of Voices and the Levin Eighteenth-Century Ensemble, in settings by Handel and Vivaldi of the Psalm "Dixit Dominus." (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. 751-1616, ext. 226. May 8 at 8.)

RECITALS

DMITRI BERLINSKY—The Soviet violinist, a first-prize winner at the Paganini and Montreal competitions, performs works by Schnittke, Beethoven, Franck, and Tchaikovsky; assisted by pianist Rohan De Silva. Presented by Young Concert Artists. (92nd Street Y. April 30 at 8.)

DOUBLE EDGE—The piano duo of Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles performs, among other works, Poulenc's Sonata for Two Pianos; premières of pieces by Judith Weir, Ioannis Psathas, and James Tenney; and the American première of "Two Lullabies for Two Pianos," composed by Benjamin Britten as BBC audition pieces in 1936, but forgotten until they resurfaced recently in the Britten-Pears Library, in Aldeburgh, England. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 30 at 8.)

HELICON ENSEMBLE—Albert Fuller directs the ensemble in Baroque concertos. Soloists include violinists Stanley Ritchie and Jaap Schröder. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. May 1 at 8.)

ELIZABETH MANN—The flutist is joined by pianist Rita Sloan and cellist Annabelle Hoffman in a program that includes the première of Bruce Adolphe's "Vision," as well as George Crumb's "Vox Balaenae," a 1971 work in which the performers evoke the sounds of whales. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 1 at 8.)

NEW YORK WOODWIND QUINTET—Performing chamber music by Beethoven, Jean Françaix, and Irving Fine, as well as the Wind Quintet (1987) by one of the group's members, oboist Ronald Roseman. (Paul Recital Hall, Juilliard School, 144 W. 66th St. May 1 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 874-7515.)

BARGEMUSIC—Violinist Nai-Yuan Hu and pianist Jeffrey Cohen perform chamber works by Mozart, Strauss, and others, (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. May 2 at 7:30 and May 5 at 4.)

MARVIS MARTIN AND CHRISTOPHER TRAKAS—The soprano and the baritone, assisted by pianist Charles Wadsworth and other musicians, present a program of songs and duets with instrumental obbligatos. (Weill Recital Hall. May 2 at 8.)

VINEYARDMUSICKE—A period-instrument concert of music written for the Prussian monarch and flutist Frederick the Great, featuring Baroque flutist Sandra Miller. The program includes works by Frederick himself (who wrote more than a hundred flute sonatas, perhaps with a little help from his professional staff); by his haughty and highly paid flute teacher, Johann Joachim Quantz; by his polite and poorly paid harpsichordist-in-residence, C. P. E. Bach; and by his youngest sister, Princess Anna Amalie. In the end, Frederick had a better career as a king than as a musician; a court memoirist related that "as he lost his teeth, he acquired a lisp that was extremely unfavorable to the sounds of his flute." (Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 353-3874. May 2 at 8.)

NEW YORK PHILOMUSICA—Presenting chamber music by Haydn, Stravinsky, Carter, Karl Kohn, and John Harbison. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 2 at 8.)

JAMES TENNEY—A performance surveying the experimental theorist-composer's recent work, including his "Rune," "Glissade," and "Quiet Fan for Erik Satie." (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. May 2 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

ANONYMOUS 4—The women's vocal quartet presents music performed at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris around the year 1200, including organa by the polyphonic masters Léonin and Pérotin. The concert also serves as a tribute to the group's namesake, "Anonymous IV" being the moniker assigned by a nineteenth-century musicologist to the unidentified thirteenth-century English student who wrote a treatise on the Parisian avant-garde of his time. While many of the texts that accompany his in the musicologist's anthology remain doomed to dusty obscurity, Anonymous IV has achieved a fame that rivals that of the composers whose work he described and, in so doing, preserved. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. May 3 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

BÖSENDORFER CHAMBER SERIES—Performing music for strings by Mozart and Eugene Phillips, as well as Brahms' Clarinet Quintet (with clarinettist David Krakauer). A benefit con-

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MUSIC—Cont'd

cert. (Bösendorfer Center, 406 E. 79th St. 472-9799. May 3 at 8.)

Christopher Tarlé—The violinist's New York recital début program includes sonatas by Beethoven and Franck. With pianist Donald Pirone. (Alice Tully Hall. May 3 at 8.)

Organists Against AIDS—Twenty-two of New York's leading organists perform in half-hour segments throughout the day, in a marathon benefit concert that concludes (at 6:30) with an audience sing-along performance of Fauré's Requiem, directed by Robert Page. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. May 4, beginning at 10 A.M. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Jaime Laredo and Sharon Robinson—The violinist and the cellist present an evening of unaccompanied duets, including works by Mozart, Glière, Ravel, and Kodály. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. May 4 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Joseph Smith—The pianist performs works by Schubert, Grieg, and Bartók. (Alice Tully Hall. May 4 at 8.)

Ax-Stern-Ma Trio—Pianist Emanuel Ax, violinist Isaac Stern, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma perform trios by Schubert, Ives, and Shostakovich. (Carnegie Hall. May 4 at 9.)

Lark String Quartet—Performing quartets by Szymanowski (his First), Bartók (his Fourth), and Janáček (his Second, subtitled "Intimate Letters"). (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. May 5 at 3.)

Omni Ensemble—The chamber ensemble, with mezzo-soprano Charlotte Hellekant, performs music by two-thirds of the nineteen-twenties group of composers known as Les Six: Milhaud, Poulenc, Honegger, and Germaine Tailleferre. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. May 5 at 3. No tickets necessary.)

Music and More—Pianist Israela Margalit, soprano Menorah Winston, and the Quintet of the Americas present solo and chamber works by Liadov, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Prokofiev; with commentary by Ms. Margalit and Martin Bookspan. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 5 at 3.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Violinist Elmar Oliveira joins the ensemble for a concert that includes a Beethoven violin sonata and Schumann's "Märchenerzählungen," as well as works by Mozart and Hindemith. (Alice Tully Hall. May 5 at 5 and May 7 at 7:30.)

Speculum Musicae—Presenting music by Ursula Mamlok, Milton Babbitt, and Mario Davidovsky, as well as New York premières of pieces by Robert Morris ("A Fabric of Seams") and Donald McDonnell ("Nexus / Dreamscape"). (Merkin Concert Hall. May 6 at 8.)

Sophie Rolland and Marc-André Hamelin—The cellist and the pianist perform all of Beethoven's chamber works for their instruments, distributed between two concerts. (Weill Recital Hall. May 6 and May 9 at 8.)

West End Chamber Players—The ensemble performs music by Mozart, Beethoven, Debussy, and Maurice Gardner (the premiere of his Bagatelles for Winds and Strings). (Weill Recital Hall. May 7 at 8.)

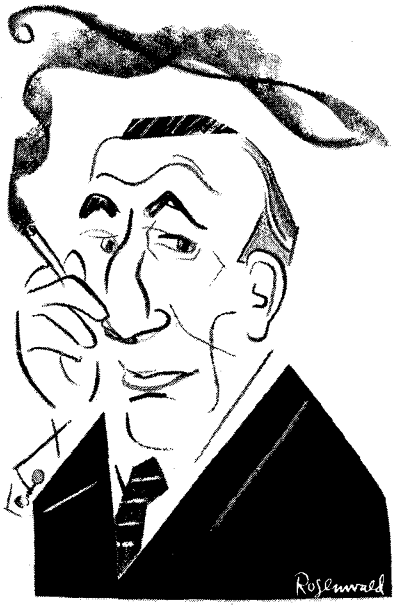
Benefit Concert—Soprano Roberta Peters, flutist Paula Robison, violinists Ani and Ida Kavafian, clarinettist Stanley Drucker, cellist Lynn Harrell, and pianists Richard Goode, Samuel Sanders, Warren Jones, and Charles Wadsworth perform in a benefit concert for the Camphill Foundation. (Avery Fisher Hall, May 7 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-5511.)

Chamber Music at the Y—A group of string players interpret Beethoven's rarely performed String Quintet in C, Op. 29; and pianist Seymour Lipkin joins the ensemble for Schumann's Piano Quintet in E-Flat and Brahms' C-minor Piano Quartet. (92nd Street Y. May 7-8 at 8.)

Emerson String Quartet—Performing two quartets by Mozart. (Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. May 8 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

League of Composers / ISCM—Presenting a wide-ranging program of works by Ben Johnston, Vladimir Ussachevsky, Olly Wilson, and other contemporary composers. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. May 8 at 7:30.)

Peter Schickele—A vocal-and-instrumental chamber ensemble presents a diverse handful of the composer's works, including "Summer Serenade," for bassoon and piano, and the première of a Mass for men's voices. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 8 at 8.)



In the Carnegie Hall Centennial Festival: a Noël Coward tribute

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Arminda Canteros—In Argentina in the nineteen-thirties—during the heyday of the tango—a mysterious pianist named Juancho dazzled radio audiences with his elaborate tango arrangements. At that time, also in Argentina, a pianist named Arminda Canteros was achieving a respectable following performing standard classical repertoire in her country's concert halls. Decades later, it was revealed that Ms. Canteros *was* Juancho. To dispel any doubts, the seventy-nine-year-old pianist will re-assume her alter ego's musical personality for two evenings of traditional and modern tangos. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. April 29 and May 6 at 8. For reservations, call 877-7843.)

Liza Minnelli—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. May 1-4 and May 8 at 8, and May 5 at 3. The engagement continues through May 12.

Gamelan Son of Lion—Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. May 1 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Scorpions—With Great White and Trixter. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 794-9300. May 3 at 8.)

Front 242—Academy Theatre, 234 W. 43rd St. 947-5850. May 3-4 at 9.

Freddie Jackson—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. May 4 at 7 and 10:30.

Gospel Concert—The Timothy Wright Concert Choir, Hezekiah Walker and His Love Fellowship Choir, the Brownsville Community Baptist Choir, and others. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. May 4 at 8.)

Carnegie Hall Centennial Festival Concerts—April 30 at 7: Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Peter, Paul & Mary, and others. (Carnegie Hall.) . . . ¶ April 30 at 8: The Nashville Bluegrass Band and the Fairfield Four. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall.) . . . ¶ May 3 at 8: "A Talent to Amuse," a tribute to Noël Coward, with Jeff Harnar, Andrea Marcovicci, Sheridan Morley, Steve Ross, David Staller, and K. T. Sullivan. (Weill Recital Hall.)

Symphony Space—May 3 at 8: Los Pleneros de la 21, José Quesada y Los Cinco Diablos, and Impacto Vallenato. . . . ¶ May 4 at 8: Orlando (Puntilla) Rios y Nueva Generación and La Troupe Makandal. (Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

Roulette—May 2: Jim Staley. . . . ¶ May 3-4: Marc Ribot and his ensemble. . . . ¶ May 5: James Fulkerson. (228 West Broadway. 219-8242. Evenings at 9.)

Benefit Performances—Suzanne Vega, Robert Ashley, and Elizabeth Streb. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. May 6 at 7:30.) . . . ¶ Harry Belafonte. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. May 8 at 7:30.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the San Diego Padres, April 30-May 1 at 7:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Francisco Giants, May 3 at 7:40, and May 4-5 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Dodgers, May 7-8 at 7:40.

Yankees—Away until May 10, when they face the Oakland A's.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499, and the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. Closes May 6. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

CHAMPIONSHIP—BASKETBALL

Knicks—Vs. the Chicago Bulls in the first playoff series (best of five). Game three is on April 30 at 7:30. Game four, if necessary, is on May 2 at 8.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Bloom City—Spring is bustin' out all over, and here are some of the best places to get a whiff. The New York Botanical Garden, in Bronx Park, is holding its Azalea Weekend on May 4-5 (open 10 to 7). Visitors to the garden can perambulate past blooming shrubberies, and nervous gardeners can get tips on azalea care and maintenance. . . . ¶ At the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, a wide variety of plants—from ivy to orchids—will be available at the annual plant sale. (1000 Washington Ave., near Grand Army Plaza. May 8, from 9 to 7, and May 9, from 9 to 3.) . . . ¶ The New York City African Violet Society is holding its twenty-fifth-anniversary show on May 4, from 1 to 6, and May 5, from noon to 5. Several hundred varieties of African violets will be on display at the Horticultural Society of New York, 128 W. 58th St.

Great American Quilt Festival—An awesome array, ranging from good old-fashioned patriotic quilts from the eighteen-fifties to 1900, to contemporary examples from as far away as Japan and Russia, to a group done very close to home, by New York City folk. (Pier 92, Twelfth Ave. at 52nd St. May 1-3, from 10 to 8; May 4, from 10 to 7; and May 5, from 10 to 6.)

Animation—About thirty animated student films, both silent and with sound, will be shown at the Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. and LaGuardia Pl., on May 3, starting at 8. Tickets at the door.

Elementary—A seminar, of sorts, that focusses on the life, times, and inner thoughts of Sherlock Holmes. Arthur Liebman, the author of a Holmes biography, will lead the discussion. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 741-5690. May 3 at 8.)

Union Square—An afternoon of events commemorating Union Square's place in local history will be held at the Roundabout Theatre (formerly Tammany Hall). Attractions include a photography exhibit, dramatic readings, and slide shows. (100 E. 17th St. May 4, from 1 to 4. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—May 5 at 2: Vivian Gornick talks about the problems women encounter on the streets of New York. (Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. For reservations, call 935-3960.) . . . ¶ May 6 at 8:15: Naomi Wolf talks about her book, "The Beauty Myth." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.)

Readings—May 2 at 7: Mona Van Duyn reads from her own poetry. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ May 3 at 8: Diane Ackerman, Charles Baxter, Lawrence Joseph, Marge Piercy, and Arthur Miller read from their own works. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. 787-6557.) . . . ¶ May 8 at 6:30: Elizabeth Van Dyke, Hattie Winston, Courtney B. Vance, and Glory Van Scott read works by Colleen J. McElroy, David Kilgore, Melvin Dixon, and Don Belton. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . ¶ May 6 at 8: Abraham Sutzkever reads from his own poetry, in Yiddish, and Ruth Whitman and Barbara and Benjamin Harshav read the translations. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.)

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 25.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Poison" (directed by Todd Haynes).
Theatre 2: "The Comfort of Strangers" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: "Requiem for Dominic" (Robert Dornhelm).
Theatre 5: "Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).
Theatre 6: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
April 29: Theatre closed.
April 30-May 2: (Separate admissions) "Maria's Story" (Monona Wali; in Spanish, with English voice-overs and subtitles); "Ashik Kerib" (1988, Paradjanov; in Georgian); and "Water and Power" (Pat O'Neil).
From May 2: Films by Yoko Ono.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn).
Theatre 3: "Dances with Wolves" (†).

Cinema 12, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through May 2: "The Vanishing" (George Sluizer, in Dutch and French).
From May 3: "Eating" (Henry Jaglom).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Killer" (James Woo, in Mandarin).
Theatre 3: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 4: Through May 2: "The British Animation Invasion," twenty-five short films. From May 3: "Rich Girl" (Joel Bender).
Theatre 5: Through May 2: "Mister Johnson" (†). From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton.
Theatre 6: "Forever Mary" (Marco Risi, in Italian).
Theatre 7: "The Grifters" (†).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 3: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 4: "Dances with Wolves" (†).
Theatre 5: Through May 2: "Alice" (†). From May 3: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker and Gregory Hines.
Theatre 6: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: Through May 2: "Mister Johnson" (†). From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton.
Theatre 2: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 2: "The Object of Beauty" (†). From May 3: "Rich Girl" (Joel Bender).
Theatre 4: "Class Action" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn).
Theatre 2: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 3: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Reversal of Fortune" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: Through May 2: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†). From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton.
Theatre 2: "The Grifters" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through May 2: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French), with Gérard Depardieu.
From May 3: "Truly, Madly, Deeply" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through May 2: "Class Action" (†).
From May 3: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

In his pre-gonzo book "Hell's Angels," Hunter S. Thompson called "The Wild One" (playing May 3-4 at Theatre 80 St. Marks) "the bike rider's answer to 'The Sun Also Rises.'" It isn't that good. But this 1954 Stanley Kramer production is the most influential leather-jacket movie of its decade. As Johnny, the leader of the Blind Rebels Motorcycle Club, Marlon Brando conjures one of his magical performances. Even when flirting with the sweet waitress who offers him redemption (it's that kind of movie), he gives this middle-of-the-road muddle an illusion of daring and complexity.

The script is based on a 1947 incident in Hollister, California: thousands of bikers, lured by a July 4th hill climb, ended up rampaging through town. The director, Laslo Benedek, and the writer, John Paxton, set up the townsfolk as symbols of forces that frustrate youths and drive them to violence. The local lawman is a weathervane; the bar-and-café owner welcomes the new customers and then throws up his hands when they turn rowdy; the xenophobic, paranoid conservative wants to lock them up right away; the token liberal is ineffectual.

The bikers are little more than overgrown kids with raging hormones. The film's blacktop power comes from its apocalyptic imagery—motorcycles swarming down an empty Western road, or circling a frightened girl until Johnny rides in like a one-man, two-wheeled cavalry—and from Brando's unpredictable performance. He invents surprisingly playful bits: zigzagging a coin across a counter, yowling softly with a dog. Lee Marvin is carnivorously macho as the former clubmate who roars into town and ignites Johnny's competitive fuse. Brando, with his insinuating walk, light voice, and loaded pauses, has a more ambiguous appeal. He's both gentle and volatile—a vial of explosives with a childproof cap.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "Oscar" (John Landis).
Theatre 3: Through April 30: "A Woman Under the Influence" (1974, John Cassavetes), with Peter Falk and Gena Rowlands. May 1-7: "The Killing of a Chinese Bookie" (1976, Cassavetes), with Ben Gazzara. From May 8: "Faces" (1968, Cassavetes), with John Marley, Rowlands, Lynn Carlin, and Seymour Cassel.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Impromptu" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 2: "Alice" (†). From May 3: "Rich Girl" (Joel Bender).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Cross My Heart" (Jacques Fansten, in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: Through May 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal. From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould).
Theatre 2: "Oscar" (John Landis).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through May 7: "Chameleon Street" (1989, directed by Wendell B. Harris, Jr.). From May 8: "Herdsmen of the Sun" (1988, Werner Herzog) and "Black Water" (Allen Moore).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Bleecker Movie House, 144 Bleecker St. (807-9205)
Through May 2: "Never Leave Nevada."
From May 3: "The Vanishing" (George Sluizer, in Dutch and French).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Oscar" (John Landis).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Impromptu" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Long Walk Home" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (James Ivory), with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward.
Theatre 3: "GoodFellas" (Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta, and Joe Pesci.
Theatre 4: "Reversal of Fortune" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 3: Through May 2: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands. From May 3: "China Cry" (James F. Colier).
Theatre 4: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).
Theatre 5: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 6: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

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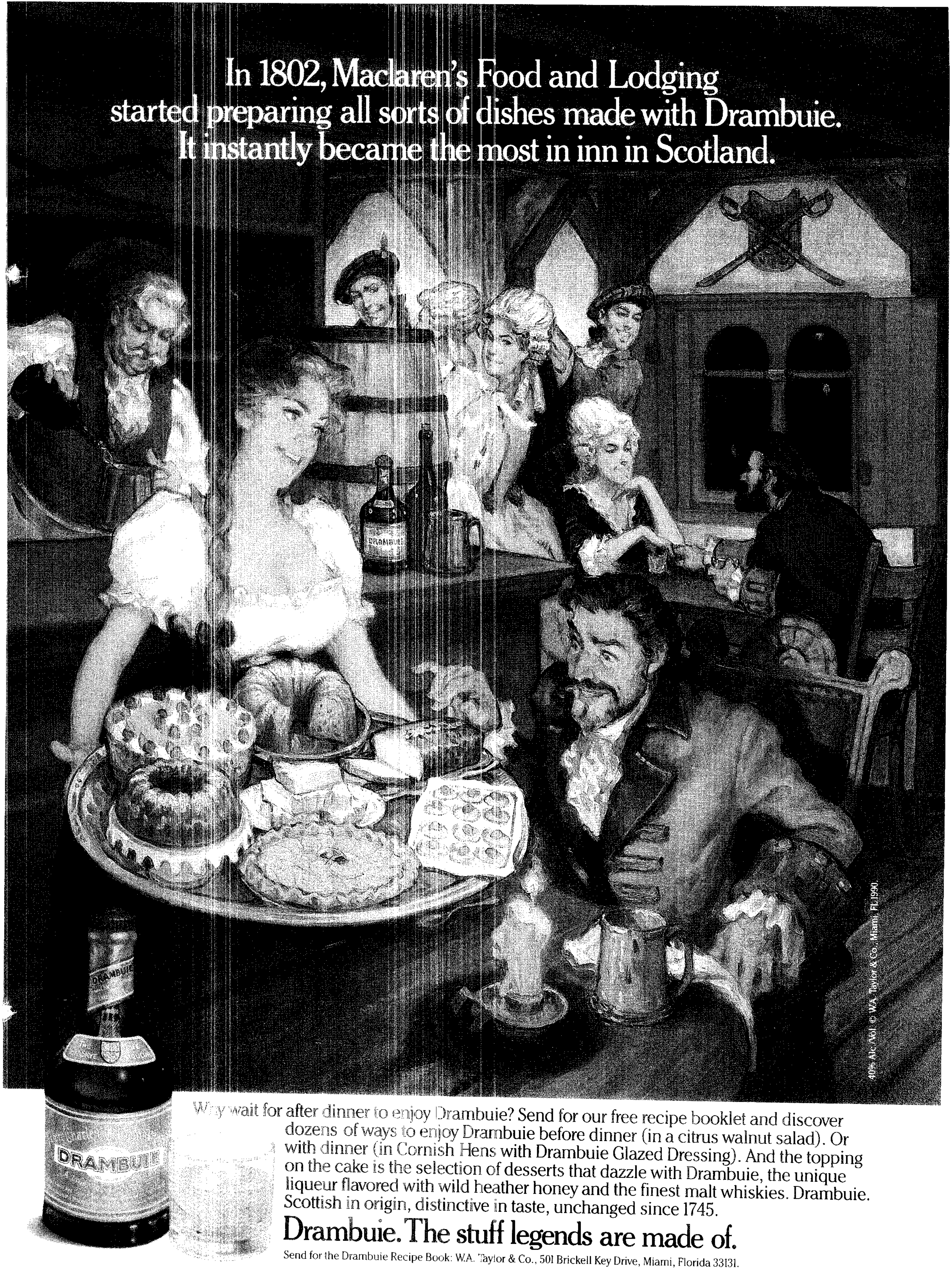

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Theatre 7: "Impromptu" (†).
Theatre 8: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 9: "The Object of Beauty" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 2: "The Grifters" (†). From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Oscar" (John Landis).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "The Long Walk Home" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Doors" (Oliver Stone).
Theatre 4: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 5: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 6: "Warlock" (Steve Miner).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Spartacus" (†).

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Journey of Hope" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 2: "Iron & Silk" (Shirley Sun).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"Daddy Nostalgia" (Bertrand Tavernier, in English and French), with Dirk Bogarde.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Requiem for Dominic" (Robert Dornhelm).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Defending Your Life" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven, in German), with Lena Stolze.
Theatre 2: "Korczak" (Andrzej Wajda, in Polish).
Theatre 3: "Ju Dou" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"The Object of Desire" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through May 2: (Matinées only) "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (†); and (evenings only) "Alice" (†). From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould).
Theatre 2: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 3: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 4: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 5: "Oscar" (John Landis), with Sylvester Stallone.
Theatre 6: Through May 2: "Dances with Wolves" (†). From May 3: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker and Gregory Hines.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 2: "Class Action" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Toy Soldiers" (directed by Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal.
Theatre 3: Through May 2: "If Looks Could Kill" (William Dear), with Richard Grieco. From May 3: "Rich Girl" (Joel Bender), with Jill Schoelen and Don Michael Paul.
Theatre 4: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 5: "GoodFellas" (Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Ray Liotta, and Joe Pesci.
Theatre 6: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through May 2: "Dances with Wolves" (†).
From May 3: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Perfect Weapon" (Mark DiSalle), with Jeffrey Speakman.
Theatre 3: Through May 2: "Ghost" (Jerry Zucker), with Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore, and Whoopi Goldberg. From May 3: "Dances with Wolves" (†).

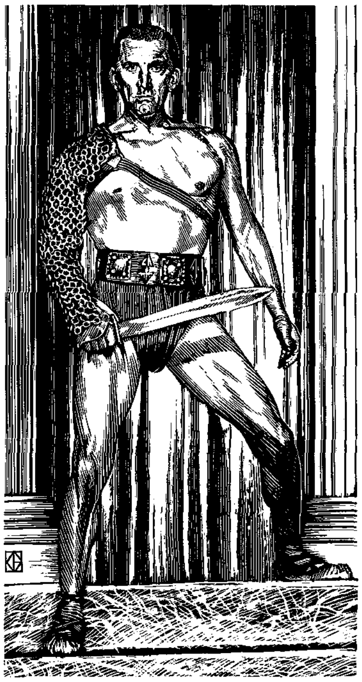
Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through May 1: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (†). (No showings April 29.)
May 2: Theatre closed.
From May 3: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker and Gregory Hines.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly.
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (James Dearden), with Matt Dillon and Sean Young.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through April 30: "Lola" (1961, directed by Jacques Demy; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Marc Michel; and "French Cancan" (1954, Jean Renoir; in French), with Jean Gabin, Maria Felix, and Edith Piaf.
From May 1: "Citizen Kane" (†).



At the Ziegfeld, Kirk Douglas as "Spartacus"

Cinema Village, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
Through April 30: "Bagdad Café" (1988, Percy Adlon), with Marianne Sägebrecht, CCH Pounder, Monica Calhoun, and Darron Flagg; and "The Brother from Another Planet" (1984, John Sayles), with Joe Morton, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Sayles.
May 1-4: "Stop Making Sense" (1984, Jonathan Demme), with Talking Heads; and "Mystery Train" (1990, Jim Jarmusch).
May 5-7: "Reversal of Fortune" (†); and "Strangers on a Train" (1951, Alfred Hitchcock), with Farley Granger, Robert Walker, and Ruth Roman.
From May 8: "Dead Ringers" (†); and "Don't Look Now" (†).

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
April 29: "The Patsy" (1928, King Vidor; silent), with Marion Davies; and "After Office Hours" (1935, Robert Z. Leonard), with Clark Gable and Constance Bennett.
April 30: "The Killers" (1946, Robert Siodmak), with Burt Lancaster and Ava Gardner; and "Lady on a Train" (1945, Charles David), with Deanna Durbin and Ralph Bellamy.
From May 1: "Citizen Kane" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
April 29: "Osaka Elegy" (1936, Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese); and "Sisters of the Gion" (1936, Mizoguchi; in Japanese).
April 30: "The Last Picture Show" (1971, Peter Bogdanovich), with Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, and Cloris Leachman; and "Nickelodeon" (1976, Bogdanovich), with Ryan O'Neal, Burt Reynolds, Tatum O'Neal, and Brian Keith.
May 1: "Dark Passage" (1947, Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "To Have and Have Not" (1944, Howard Hawks), with Bogart and Bacall.
May 2: "The Wild Bunch" (1969, Sam Peckinpah), with William Holden, Ernest Borgnine, and Robert Ryan; and "Straw Dogs" (1972, Peckinpah), with Dustin Hoffman and Susan George.
May 3-4: "On the Waterfront" (Elia Kazan), with Marlon Brando, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger; and "The Wild One" (see blurb on page 22).
May 5: "The Manchurian Candidate" (1962, John Frankenheimer), with Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh, Angela Lansbury, and James Gregory; and "On the Beach" (1959, Stanley Kubrick), with Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner, Anthony Perkins, and Fred Astaire.
May 6: "Rififi" (†) and "Shoot the Piano Player" (†).
May 7: "Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion" (1970, Elio Petri; in Italian), with Gian Maria Volonte; and "Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man" (1981, Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi and Anouk Aimée.
May 8: "Dragonwyck" (1946, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney, Vincent Price, Walter Huston, and Glenn Langan; and "My Cousin Rachel" (1952, Henry Koster), with Olivia de Havilland and Richard Burton.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—April 29 at 2:30: "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948, directed by Orson Welles), with Welles, Rita Hayworth, and Everett Sloane. . . . ¶ April 29 at 6 and April 30 at 2:30: "The Magnificent Ambersons" (1942, Welles), with Tim Holt, Joseph Cotten, and Dolores Costello. . . . ¶ April 30 at 3: "After the Curfew" (1954, Usmar Ismail; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ April 30 at 6: "Citizen Kane" (†). . . . ¶ April 30 at 6: "Three Fugitives" (1957, Nya' Abbas Acub; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ May 2 at 3 and 6: "Green Streets" (1989, Maria De Luca), a documentary. . . . ¶ May 3 at 3: "The Barbed Wire Fence" (1961, Asrul Sani; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ May 3 at 6 and May 4 at 2:30: "My Father" (1988, Agus Ellyas; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ May 4 at 5: "Behind the Mosquito Net" (1982, Teguh Karya; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ May 5 at 2:30: "Mother" (1988, Karya; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ May 5 at 5: "Three Daughters" (1956, Ismail; in Bahasa Indonesia). . . . ¶ May 6 at 2: "The Asthenia Syndrome" (1989, Kira Muratova; in Russian). . . . ¶ May 6 at 6: Three films by Peter Thompson, who will be present. . . . ¶ May 7 at 3 and 6: "Creative Process: Norman McLaren" (1990, Donald McWilliams), a documentary. Mr. McWilliams will be present.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"The Art of Reality: Innovators of the Documentary." May 5 at 1: "Primary" (1960, Robert Drew). Mr. Drew will be present. . . . ¶ May 5 at 4:30: "Salesman" (1968, Albert and David Maysles). Albert Maysles will be present.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—May 1 at 7: Three films by Cocteau—"Le Sang d'un Poète" (1930), "Orphée" (1950), and "Le Testament d'Orphée" (1960), all in French, with no English subtitles. . . . ¶ May 2 at 7: "Chronicle of the Years of Embers" (1975, Mohammed Lakdhar-Hamina; in Algerian). . . . ¶ May 3 at 8: "A Wife for My Son" (1982, Ali Ghalem; in Algerian). . . . ¶ May 3 at 8: "Zorns Lemma" (1970, Hollis Frampton). . . . ¶ May 3 at 9:30: "Serene Velocity" (1970) and "Still" (1971), both by Ernie Gehr. . . . ¶ May 3 at 10: "Story of an Encounter" (1983, Brahim Tsaki; in Algerian). . . . ¶ May 4 at 6: "Nanook of the North" (1922, Robert Flaherty). . . . ¶ May 4 at 8: "Omar Gatlato" (1976, Merzak Allouche; in Algerian). . . . ¶ May 4 at 8: A program of short films by Yann Beauvais. . . . ¶ May 4-5 at 9:30: "Marjorie Morningstar" (1958, Irving Rapper), with Gene Kelly, Natalie

Wood, and Claire Trevor. . . . ¶ May 5 at 5: "Zvenigora" (1928, Alexandr Dovzhenko; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ May 5 at 7: "Adventures of a Hero" (1978, Merzak Allouache; in Algerian). . . . ¶ May 8 at 7: "Arsenal" (1929, Dovzhenko; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ May 8 at 9: "Antigone" (1989, Amy Greenfield).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—May 3 at 6:30: "The Funeral of Roses" (1969, Toshio Matsumoto, in Japanese) and "Shura" (1971, Matsumoto; in Japanese).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—April 30 at 6:15 and May 1 at 2: "The Man in the Mirror" (1990, Aimee Morgana) and "History and Memory" (1991, Rea Tajiri). . . . ¶ May 2-3 at 2: "Hard Times and Culture, Part 1" (1990, Juan Downey) and "Strategies for the Development of . . ." (1989, Lawrence Andrews). . . . ¶ May 4-5 at 2: "A Spy in the House That Ruth Built" (1989, Vanalyne Green) and "Blind Country" (1989, Ericka Beckman and Mike Kelley). . . . ¶ May 7 at 6:15 and May 8 at 2: "The Deadman" (1989, Peggy Ahwesh and Keith Sanborn) and "Because We Must" (1989, Charles Atlas).

Museum of Television and Radio, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Programs about contemporary comedians and people who influenced them. Gilda Radner: April 30-May 4: Excerpts from Radner's television performances; and clips of Jackie Gleason, Imogene Coca, Gracie Allen, and Jerry Lewis. Showings Tuesday at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesday through Saturday at 12:15. . . . ¶ "On Stage at Carnegie Hall: A Centennial Celebration." April 30-May 4: "The Gala—Symphonicum Europae" (1979, CBC), with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, featuring Yehudi Menuhin, Ruggiero Ricci, Jean-Pierre Rampal, and others. . . . From May 7: "Captain Kangaroo at Carnegie Hall" (1962, CBS), with Bob Keeshan; and "What Does Orchestration Mean?" (1958, CBS), a Young People's Concert series, with Leonard Bernstein. Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ "A Salute to Monty Python." April 30-May 4: Episodes 31-35 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus," with Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin. . . . From May 7: Episodes 36-40 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus." Showings Tuesdays at 12:15, 2:30, and 5:30; Wednesdays through Fridays at 12:15 and 2:30; and Saturdays at 12:15.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—May 1 at 12:30, 3:30, 6, and 8:45: "Henry & June" (1990, Philip Kaufman), with Fred Ward, Uma Thurman, and Maria de Medeiros. . . . ¶ May 8 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "A Game for Six Lovers" (1960, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze; in French), with Bernadette Lafont, Michel Galabru, and Françoise Brion.

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—April 30 at noon: "North by Northwest" (1959, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, Martin Landau, and Jessie Royce Landis. . . . ¶ April 30 at 2:30: "Strangers and Kin" (1983, Herb E. Smith). . . . ¶ May 2 at noon: "Lights, Action, Africa!" (1981, Alan and Joan Root). . . . ¶ May 7 at noon: "Jack Johnson" (1973, Jim Jacobs). . . . ¶ May 7 at 2:30: "My Friend Flicka" (1943, Harold Schuster), with Roddy McDowall, Preston Foster, and Rita Johnson.

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—"Projected Radiance: The Cinema of Indonesia." May 1 at 6: "Naga Bonar" (1987, M. T. Riysaf). . . . ¶ May 2 at 6: "The Knight of Madanghara" (1987, Imam Tantowi). . . . ¶ May 8 at 6: "Roro Mendut" (1982, Ami Priyono).

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—"William Greaves: Chronicler of the African-American Experience." May 4 at 7:30: "Nationtime, Gary" (1977). . . . ¶ May 5 at 2: "Black Dance" (1970, St. Claire Bourne), "Black Athletes" (1979, Stan Lathan), "Malcolm X" (1969, Madeline Anderson), and "Focus: South Africa" (1969, Tony Batten). St. Clair Bourne will be present.

92nd St. Y, Lexington at 92nd. (996-1100)—May 5 at 7:30: "Wedding in Galilee" (1987, Michael Khleifi; in Arabic and Hebrew).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Alice—Woody Allen's latest picture is an awkward blend of whimsy and moralizing. The title character, played by Mia Farrow, is a pampered Upper East Side lady-who-lunches. She lives in a huge apartment with her handsome husband (William Hurt), her adorable children, and a staff, and she looks terrific. But her life, the movie tells us, is totally empty and false. A Chinatown doctor (Keye Luke) gives her a variety of herbal remedies to knock the yuppie malaise out of her system. One of them makes her invisible; one makes her irresistible to men; and so on. As these fantasy episodes mount up, Alice begins to see how artificial her life is, how far she's strayed from the pure ideals of her Catholic girlhood, how much more love she needs than she has been getting, and what a revolting piece of Wasp slime her husband is. In the end, the heroine seems, incredibly, to have redeemed herself through self-absorption; the movie doesn't benefit from any such miracle. Although there are more jokes here than in any of Allen's last few features, the picture isn't really a comedy; it's a sermon with gags. The large cast also includes Joe Mantegna, Alec Baldwin, Blythe Danner, Judy Davis, Bob Balaban, and Bernadette Peters (who does a sensational brief turn as a cynical muse).—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/31/90.) (Loews 19th Street East 6, and Loews New York Twin; through May 2. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through May 2, evenings only.)

Class Action—In this high-concept legal thriller, directed by Michael Apted, Gene Hackman plays a flamboyant lawyer who specializes in civil-liberties and consumer-advocacy cases, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio plays his daughter, an ambitious associate in a slick corporate-law firm. The script—by Carolyn Shelby, Christopher Ames, and Samantha Shad—contrives to pit the father and the daughter against each other in a negligence suit against an auto manufacturer. Sparks, both personal and professional, are meant to fly, but the Hollywood engineers who designed this piece of product have cut a few too many corners: the thriller plotting is predictable, the family drama is broad and sentimental, and the connections between them are facile. Yet Hackman and Mastrantonio somehow manage to impart lifelike rhythms to their scenes together: their skill keeps this rickety contraption from stalling completely.—T.R. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ 59th Street East Cinema; through May 2.)

Citizen Kane (1941)—The Orson Welles film is generally considered the greatest American film of the sound period, and it may be more fun than any other great movie. Based on the life of William Randolph Hearst, it's an exuberant, muckraking attack on an archetypal economic baron. With Welles, of course, and Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, Everett Sloane, George Coulouris, Ruth Warrick, Ray Collins, Erskine Sanford, William Alland, Paul Stewart, Fortunio Bonanova, Gus Schilling, and Philip Van Zandt. Screenplay by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Welles; cinematography by Gregg Toland; editing by Robert Wise and Mark Robson. P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 30. . . . ¶ Biograph Cinema, and Film Forum 2; starting May 1.)

The Comfort of Strangers—Harold Pinter's screenplay, adapted from a novel by Ian McEwan, is a kinky contemporary variation on the sort of plot that made Victorian readers shiver—the story of innocents lured into the clutches of charming villains. The innocents here are an unmarried English couple (Natasha Richardson and Rupert Everett) vacationing in Venice; the evil seducers are a husband and wife (Christopher Walken and Helen Mirren) whose tastes run to voyeurism and sadomasochism; the dread lair in which the monsters toy with their prey is a huge, ornately furnished apartment with a spectacular view of the city. The director, Paul Schrader, dresses his characters in Armani and sets the camera in motion to swirl gracefully around them, picking up miragelike shimmers from the canals and beautiful but ominous architectural details; the languorous camera movements create an authentically gothic sense of catastrophe just around the corner. Walken glides effortlessly through his role as the embodiment of Old World evil. He gives the character a lordly, sinister air, and suggests, as well, that he's wearing something really odd underneath his superbly tailored white suits. And Richardson is characteristically amazing: she brings a touch of humanity to this rather formal party. The movie improves on the novel by jettisoning its dubious psychology and its pretensions to literary significance. Schrader treats the story as an elegant horror-movie game, a trick done with mirrors, and he carries it off. Dante Spinotti's cinematography and Gianni Quaranta's production design contribute to the luxurious, decadent atmosphere. Music by Angelo Badalamenti.—T.R. (4/8/91) (Angelika Film Center.)

Dances with Wolves—Set during the Civil War, this big Indians-versus-Cavalry epic is like a New Age social-studies lesson. Kevin Costner, who directed and is the star, has an untroubled face and laid-back diction. As Lieutenant Dunbar, a Union officer, he sees that the Sioux have a superior culture and he changes sides. This is a nature-boy movie, a kid's daydream of being an Indian. When Dunbar has become a Sioux named Dances with Wolves, he writes in his journal that he knows for the first time who he really is. Costner has feathers in his hair and feathers in his head. He and his friend Michael Blake (who worked up the material with him in mind and then wrote the novel and the screenplay) are trying to show the last years of the Sioux as an independent nation from the Sioux point of view, and it's probably that sympathy for the Indians that the audience responds to. But Costner is a moviemaking novice: instead of helping us understand the Sioux, he simply makes the Sioux like genial versions of us. This three-hour Western weeper, with its sluggish action and poorly shaped scenes, was made by a bland megalomaniac. (The Indians should have named him Plays with Camera.) Shot in South Dakota; the wide-screen cinematography, by Dean Semler, is spacious and open at times, and there are fine images of buffalo pounding by. With Mary McDonnell, Maury Chaykin, Robert Pastorelli, Graham Greene as Kicking Bird, and Rodney A. Grant as Wind in His Hair.—P.K. (12/17/90) (Movieland 8th St. Playhouse, Loews 19th Street East 6, Bay Cinema, and Loews Tower East. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy 1; through May 2. . . . ¶ Embassy; starting May 3.)

Dead Ringers (1988)—David Cronenberg's psychological thriller tells a lurid story with chilling, clinical austerity. It's about identical twins, Beverly and Elliot Mantle (both played by Jeremy Irons), who have shared everything about their lives since childhood: they live together, practice gynecology together, and sleep with the same women. They look at the world and see only each other; they're dying of self-reflection. When the more sensitive of the twins, Bev, tries to break the pattern to establish some real emotional link to the world outside, the attempt is doomed. He falls in love with an actress named Claire Niveau (Geneviève Bujold), but he can't handle the pressures and uncertainties of an adult relationship. He retreats into drug addiction and madness, and carries his brother with him. Irons' performance is daring: he turns himself into a nightmarish cartoon of decadence. As usual, Cronenberg's work gleams with intelligence, and goes as far as it can go. Yet there's something suspect about his imagination. In "Dead Ringers" the freakish material and the director's usual subtexts of sexual perversity and biological paranoia are deployed with an almost unnatural cunning. This movie about narcissism keeps turning further and further inward, and it makes us do the same.

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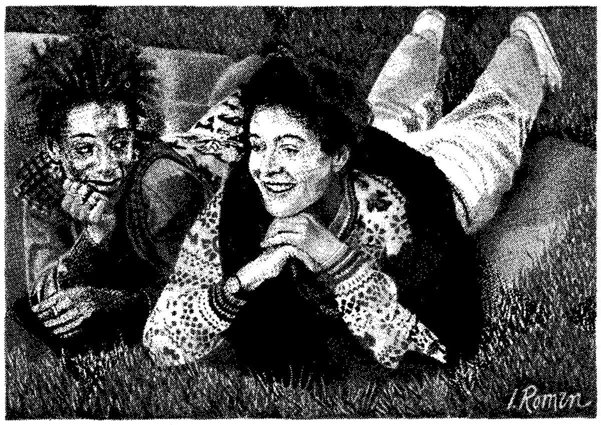
Cronenberg stirs up emotions that are so threatening, so overpowering, that we can respond only by withdrawing. The film affects us like a particularly upsetting visit to the doctor. The script, by the director and Norman Snider, is loosely based on the novel "Twins," by Bari Wood and Jack Geasland, which was itself inspired by the real-life story of the Marcus twins, New York gynecologists who were found dead together in an East Side apartment in 1975. Cinematography by Peter Suschitzky; the excellent score is by Howard Shore.—T.R. (Cinema Village; starting May 8.)

Defending Your Life—The setting of Albert Brooks' disappointing new comedy is a place called Judgment City, which, according to this picture, is where people from Southern California go after death. Here recently completed lives are examined and evaluated, in a formal proceeding something like a trial: if the defendant wins the case, he moves up the cosmic ladder to a higher form of consciousness. The hero, Daniel Miller (Brooks), a yuppie adman who met his untimely end in a brand-new BMW, naturally believes in upward mobility; in death, as in life, he wants to impress the higher-ups and get that promotion. Although this sounds like an ideal setup for Brooks' kind of comedy, the film is mild-mannered and blandly whimsical, and its rhythms are sluggish. The humor doesn't have any satiric edge, because the character Brooks has written for himself isn't the egotistical, grotesquely baby boomer he played in his three previous movies. Daniel Miller is less an eager beaver than a cute, scurrying mouse: the case against him is that he lacked the drive to make the most of his opportunities on earth. You don't want to believe that the picture is really saying what it appears to be saying: that Daniel's lack of aggressiveness represents a poignant, tragic failure of self-actualization. Brooks is celebrating qualities he used to satirize, and there's something smarmy about his attempt to turn himself into a lovable schlemiel—to cast a warmer, more flattering light on the self that his other pictures mercilessly exposed. Also with Meryl Streep, Lee Grant, and, as the hero's lawyer, Rip Torn, who periodically energizes the movie with some lunatic courtroom theatricality.—T.R. (4/22/91) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews Paramount.)



Joy Lee and Sean Young in "A Kiss Before Dying"

Don't Look Now (1973)—A Daphne du Maurier story of the occult, presented in fast, splintered, almost subliminal imagery. Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland team up wonderfully as parents whose drowned daughter may or may not be sending them messages. The meanings are on a simple Hitchcock level, but the unnerving cold ominousness of the environment (mostly Venice, deserted at the end of the season) says that things are not what they seem. Life is treated as a puzzle and the clues are in references that go by in split seconds. This was the fanciest, most carefully assembled enigma put on the screen to date. Nicolas Roeg is a chillingly chic director; the picture is an example of high-fashion gothic sensibility. It seems to say what Joseph Losey never dared to but what the audience for Losey's films was always responding to: that decay among the rich and beautiful is sexy. Venice, the labyrinthine city of pleasure, with its crumbling, leering gargoyles, is obscurely, frighteningly sensual here, and an early sex sequence with Christie and Sutherland nude in bed, intercut with their post-coital mood as they dress to go out together, has an extraordinary erotic glitter. Dressing is splintered and sensualized, like fear and death. Using du Maurier as a base, Roeg comes closer to getting Borges on the screen than those who have tried it directly, but there's a distasteful clamminess about the picture. Roeg's style is in love with disintegration.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting May 8.)

La Femme Nikita—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Five Heartbeats—There isn't a good scene per Heartbeat in this rags-to-sequins story of a Temptations-like five-man singing group. The sweet temper and eager-to-please showmanship of director-star Robert Townsend (who co-wrote the script with Keenen Ivory Wayans) can't compensate for his amateur filmmaking. The early sequences of the quintet's formation have some vaudevillian humor and unzipped energy, but then Townsend crams too much in: racism, "crossover" pressures, drugs, criminality, sexual and professional competition, and, yes, religious redemption. None of the Heartbeats (Townsend, Michael Wright, Leon, Harry J. Lennix, Tico Wells, and, later, John Canada Terrell) score the way Lonette McKee did in the girl-group movie "Sparkle." The only singer who *does*—Tressa Thomas, who plays Townsend's baby sister—performs once and is never heard from again. She tears through a number called "We Haven't Finished Yet." Townsend should have taken that cue: his movie is painfully unfinished.—M.S. (23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

The Grifters—This adaptation of one of the punchier pulp novels by Jim Thompson retains Thompson's hardboiled pitilessness. It's about three scam artists: tough, seductive Lilly (Anjelica Huston); her son, Roy (John Cusack), who won't have anything to do with her; and his bubbly bedmate, Myra (Annette Bening), a sex fantasy come to luscious life. These chisellers never got a break and don't give anybody else a break. The director, Stephen Frears, and the scriptwriter, Donald E. Westlake, are smart enough not to attempt to make a big thing out of this L.A. film noir. They keep it snappy, and heighten the sexual electricity. And they smack us with discord; we're watching a form of cabaret. Huston is astounding—you can see why the son is getting even with her by throwing his life away—and Bening's two-faced little-girl quality is just what film noir thrives on. (This is a picture with two competing femmes fatales.) It's thin stuff, but it's pretty terrific. (It even has great opening titles.) With Pat Hingle giving the performance of his life.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Village East Cinemas, and Sutton. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; through May 2.)

Guilty by Suspicion—Can a mannequin acquire political consciousness? That's the only question raised by this flaccid anti-HUAC morality play. To judge from Robert De Niro's hollow impersonation of a blacklisted director, the answer is no. Irwin Winkler, the veteran producer who here makes his directing dêbut, has designed De Niro's hero as a good-hearted liberal (circa 1951) who just wants to keep making movies without naming names. Winkler and De Niro hope to forge a magnet for sympathy and instead construct a vacuum. The politics get sucked right in. Only peripheral figures turn out to be lapsed or unrepentant Communists, or even steady sympathizers. The victims include a Joseph Losey-like director (played with amusing snap by Martin Scorsese) and a Dorothy Comingore-like actress (Patricia Wettig, in a stupefying histrionic exhibition).

How virtuous is this movie? Annette Bening plays De Niro's ex-wife—a schoolteacher. Because of the blacklist, they kiss and make up. The script is credited to Winkler.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street East 6. . . . ¶ Sutton; through May 2.)

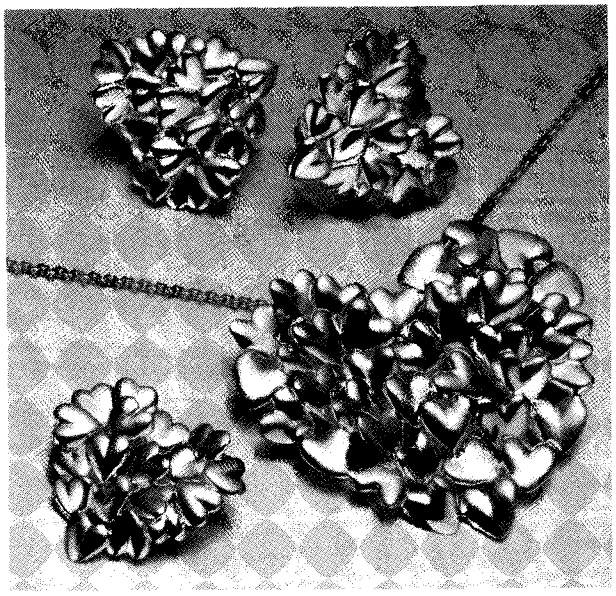
Impromptu—With Judy Davis, Hugh Grant, Mandy Patinkin, Bernadette Peters, and Julian Sands; directed by James Lapine. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Beekman, Art Greenwich Twin, and Chelsea Cinemas.)

Journey of Hope—It's actually a journey into fear: a struggling Turkish farmer takes his wife and young son on a perilous trek to Switzerland, hoping to find "paradise behind the mountains." Black-market operators strip them of their possessions and dignity. The action in this icy muckraker culminates when the family and other Turks cross the Alps at night—without a guide—in a snowstorm. Inspired by a 1988 newspaper article, Xavier Koller's movie is just as topical now—it recalls the Kurdish catastrophe, even though these Turks are economic (not political) refugees, fleeing by the dozens (not the hundreds of thousands). But Koller doesn't give the audience a guide, either; he fails to lay out the issues coherently and dramatically. Intentionally or not, he makes his hero (the dour patriarch) seem foolish for abandoning a harsh but organic rural life. For better or worse—mostly worse—"Journey of Hope" duplicates the Latin-American refugee saga "El Norte": the eerie, harrowing border crossings are the only scenes as powerful as they should be. The rest amount to a lament for the dysfunctional Family of Man. (In Turkish, Italian, and Swiss German, with English and French subtitles.)—M.S. (57th St. Playhouse.)

Ju Dou—It's been compared to James M. Cain, but the postman barely rings once in this tale of adultery Chinese style. In a small mountain village in the twenties, an impotent dye-mill owner (Li Wei), crazed over his lack of an heir, tortures his beautiful young bride (Gong Li). She seeks comfort in the arms of his worker nephew (Li Bao-Tian). There's no compelling plot, only the grinding inevitability of fate and tradition. The director, Zhang Yimou, simply metes out punishment to the lovers, the tyrant—and the audience. The lovers' son does most of the damage. He has the lethal power of the Children of the Damned—unfortunately, without the gimmicky zest of their eerie, glowing eyeballs. Zhang started out as a painter and still photographer. He remains one, devoting more attention to the dye mill's set design than to the story or the characters. The bolts of fabric are colored in subtle, vivid hues; the people are made out of whole cloth. In Mandarin.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Long Walk Home—Sisterhood—and liberalism—are powerful once again in this soul-stirring civil-rights drama. A bit too programmatic for the big screen, it would have been a landmark TV movie. But the cast overcomes. Sissy Spacek plays a proper Southern matron with an independent streak, and Whoopi Goldberg is the housemaid who inspires her to become a car-pool driver during the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-56. Goldberg has never been better. In a part calling for restraint and constant wariness, she has all-seeing eyes. She summons an embattled dignity that gathers tremendous cumulative force. Spacek is appropriately smug as well as sharply empathic; for a role of this type, she's unusually unsentimental. Working from a script by John Cork (a Montgomery native), under the direction of Richard Pearce, these actresses embody the old integrationist dream: they descry each other's positions and seize a common ground. The movie is designed to be "inspirational," but it respects your intelligence. The climax is rousing, not rabble-rousing.—M.S. (Quad Cinema, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Mister Johnson—An adaptation, directed by Bruce Beresford, of a 1939 Joyce Cary novel about a young Nigerian who works for British colonists in a remote rural outpost. The title character (played by Maynard Eziashi) is an outsized, broadly conceived comic invention—a man who seems to identify more strongly with his employers than with his countrymen. He composes grandiose songs of praise to "England, my home" (he's never been there), and he serves the stolid, pipe-smoking colonial district officer with ferocious enthusiasm. For Johnson, the ways of the white man's civilization are the elements of a romance, an epic song full of color and grand



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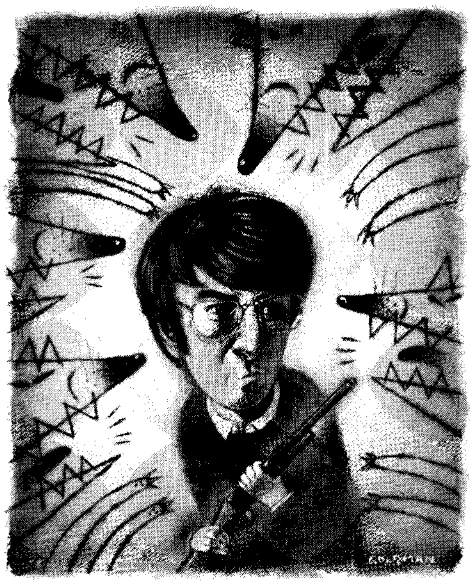
adventure: he looks at the world through the eyes of a poet, and transforms all he sees. The subject of the novel isn't the conflict between the culture of West Africa and that of the imperialist occupiers; it's the contrast between the wild fertility of an artist's imagination and the barrenness of his actual circumstances. The movie is skillful, handsome, and consistently enjoyable, but its studied style makes Cary's story seem a far more conventional colonial satire than it really is. For the most part, Beresford directs like an intelligent man who just isn't quite getting the point. Eziashi, however, is a splendid Johnson: the movie's few surviving traces of the novel's complex wit are all contained in fleeting expressions on the actor's broad, smiling face. Also with Pierce Brosnan, Edward Woodward, Femi Fatoba, Beatie Edney, Bela Enahoro, Nick Reding, and Kwabena Manso. Screenplay by William Boyd; cinematography by Peter James.—T.R. (4/8/91) (Village East Cinemas, and Murray Hill Cinemas; through May 2.)

NEW JACK CITY—A Saturday night not-so-special, with juicy bits and pieces. Mario Van Peebles' primitive but energetic anti-drug melodrama stars Wesley Snipes as a self-made crack king, Ice-T and Judd Nelson as the cops who try to bring him down, and Van Peebles himself as their boss, modestly named Stone. The screenwriters, Thomas Lee Wright and Barry Michael Cooper, portray Snipes' charismatic villain as a brutal ghetto cousin of the eighties white-collar criminals. He believes that a man must "rob to get rich in the Reagan era." He also must extort and murder. In the most jolting sequence, he turns an entire building into a crack apartment house. The narrative is a hash. With its combination of alienation and derring-do, "New Jack City" is like Melvin Van Peebles' "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" and Brian De Palma's "Scarface" (it contains clips from both) crossed with "Serpico" and earnest TV cops-and-robbers series. When the drug lord's romantic problems come to the fore, you wonder if you missed an episode. As a whole, the movie resembles sixties biker movies as well as seventies blaxploitation films: the camera keeps riding the action, and the cast is loose and entertaining.—M.S. (Manhattan Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and West Side Cinema.)

THE OBJECT OF BEAUTY—Jake (John Malkovich) and Tina (Andie MacDowell) are a glamorous American couple camping out in a suite in a swank London hotel. They're unable to settle their account, which when the movie begins stands at about six thousand pounds, because Jake, a speculator, has blown all his money on a bad investment. Jake and Tina are unmarried and have no permanent address; they're charming, attractive drifters, getting by on style. In a sense, they're throwbacks to the sophisticated and slightly disreputable couples who floated airily through thirties romantic comedies: no-strings types who stick together for the best shallow reasons—for sex and laughs and the shared kick of living the high life without having to work too hard. The picture, written and directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg, is conceived as high-style fluff, but it never delivers quite as much irresponsible fun as it promises. It's like a Lubitsch movie without the speed and the grace and the blissful inconsequentiality. Malkovich, however, is unaccountably magnetic here as he was in "Dangerous Liaisons." His performance is a postmodern mutation of thirties style, an ungodly hybrid of William Powell and Boris Karloff, and it's sensationally funny. This is as original a piece of acting as you'll ever see in a romantic comedy. The supporting players are an unusually lively group: Lolita Davidovich, Peter Riegert, Joss Ackland, and Bill Paterson.—T.R. (4/22/91) (Village East Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas; through May 2.)

PARIS IS BURNING—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Film Forum.)



At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Dustin Hoffman in "Straw Dogs"

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE—An entertainingly trashy sick-joke docudrama about how Claus von Bülow's conviction for trying to kill his superrich wife was overturned on appeal through the brainpower of the Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz and his team of students and former students. Jeremy Irons' von Bülow is a pop conception of a decadent aristocrat, and the crowd-pleasing satirical subtext is that the heirs and heiresses of the great fortunes are useless, bored, unloving, and unloved. The fun here is that Irons' performance is a masterly conceit. His von Bülow is a depraved cuckoo; he simply can't resist playing ghoulish comedian and making Dershowitz (Ron Silver) his stooge. The script, by Nicholas Kazan, is skillfully constructed, but it's based on Dershowitz's book about the case, and he's the protagonist—the crusading lawyer searching for evidence of innocence. Silver's Dershowitz seems to be overdosing on proud sentimental Jewishness. (That this is a positive stereotype makes it no less a stereotype.) The direction, by Barbet Schroeder, is assured but often impersonal and emptily energetic. With Glenn Close (very effective as Sunny von Bülow, the comatose narrator), Christine Baranski as Andrea Reynolds, Julie Hagerty (uncredited) as Alexandra Isles, and Stephen Mailer, Annabella Sciorra, Uta Hagen, and Fisher Stevens. Music by Mark Isham.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Eastside Cinema, and Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Cinema Village; May 5-7.)

RIFIFI (1955)—A quartet of thieves breaks into a jewelry store, and for a tense half hour we watch as they work, silently. The film is like a highly skilled documentary on how to disconnect a burglar alarm and open a safe, and it is thoroughly engrossing, because we see the criminals as craftsmen, and we celebrate their teamwork, their finesse, their triumph.

Ironically, we find ourselves sympathizing with their honest exhaustion after their dishonest labor. From there on, this movie, made in France, by the American director Jules Dassin, follows the tradition of "Scarface," "Public Enemy," and "The Asphalt Jungle" (and of "Macbeth" before them), bringing the tragic, trapped figures (now symbols of our own anti-social impulses) to a cadaverous finish. Along the way, Dassin keeps things actively vicious, with glimpses of underworld prostitutes and hopheads and a murder, a kidnapping, and the thrashing of a faithless mistress, who is stripped. "Rififi" is the granddaddy of a batch of suspense films featuring how to knock over safes or break into banks and museums, but its own chief distinction is its nasty tone. With Jean Servais, Robert Manuel, Carl Mohner, and Dassin as the four; and Robert Hossein, Marie Sabouret, Magali Noel. In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 6.)

Shoot the Piano Player (1960)—This François Truffaut film is based on David Goodis's "Down There," a trim, well-written American crime novel. The movie busts out all over—and that's what's wonderful about it. Comedy, pathos, and tragedy are all scrambled up. Charlie, the sad-faced little piano player (Charles Aznavour), is the thinnest-skinned of modern heroes: each time he has cared about someone he has suffered, and now he just wants to be "out of it." This is a comedy about melancholia—perhaps the only comedy about melancholia. Truffaut is freely inventive here—a young director willing to try almost anything—and Charlie's encounters with the world are filled with good and bad jokes, bits from old Sacha Guitry films, clowns and thugs, tough kids, songs and fantasy and snow scenes, and homage to the American Grade B gangster pictures of the forties and fifties. The film is nihilistic in attitude, yet by its wit and good spirits it's totally involved in life and fun. Nothing is clear-cut; the ironies crisscross and bounce. With Nicole Berger, Marie Dubois, Albert Rémy, Michèle Mercier, and Daniel Boulanger. Written by Truffaut and Marcel Moussy; cinematography by Raoul Coutard. In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 6.)

The Silence of the Lambs—Adapted from a novel by Thomas Harris, Jonathan Demme's thriller is artful pulp—tabloid material treated with intelligence and care and a weird kind of sensitivity. The heroine, Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster), is an earnest F.B.I. trainee who is selected to interview Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins), a psychiatrist who is also a famous mass murderer; her superiors hope that Lecter's twisted expertise can somehow be used to help them catch a serial killer known as Buffalo Bill, who flays his victims. In the course of the movie, these conversations between the trainee and the psychiatrist turn into edgy, complex transactions in which she reveals pieces of her inner life in return for his hints on how to find the killer. Hopkins plays the monster with a fine, cold relish: he gives the character a mesmeric animal stillness, the terrifying opacity of a cobra. And the impact of his performance is heightened by its contrast with everything surrounding it: the scrupulous realism of Demme's style, the mundane details of police procedure, and, in particular, the emotional transparence of the heroine. Demme keeps our attention on Starling and her shifting reactions to the world, and his most striking achievement in this picture is his direction of Jodie Foster. The suspense of this manhunt isn't of the straight-ahead kind we're used to: it's reflective, oscillating between approach and avoidance—it has an unnerving intimacy. Also with Scott Glenn, Ted Levine (as Buffalo Bill), Anthony Heald, and Brooke Smith. The screenplay, which is extremely faithful to the novel, is by Ted Tally.—T.R. (2/25/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews New York Twin, Waverly, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Sleeping with the Enemy—Julia Roberts, as a frightened young wife who fakes her death and changes her identity to escape her rich husband (Patrick Bergin), a psychopathic perfectionist. Roberts is an incredible object—you can at least see why a perfectionist would want to hang on to her. But she's a blank goddess here, and the settings—Cape Cod and Cedar Falls, Iowa (both shot in North and South Carolina)—are uninspiring. The director, Joseph Ruben, does a smooth job, with snappy editing every time there's a cut to the enraged husband on the wife's trail. There are no surprise twists, though; the picture is a glossy combination of secondhand showing-off-Julia scenes from "Pretty Woman" and secondhand scares from "The Stepfather." Ronald Bass's script, out of a novel by Nancy Price, is one letdown after another. With Kevin Anderson, Elizabeth Lawrence, and Nancy Fish. The score, by Jerry Goldsmith, keeps plugging away at ominousness.—P.K. (2/11/91) (Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Criterion Center.)

Spartacus (1960)—This may be the best-paced and most slyly entertaining of all the decadent-ancient-Rome spectacular films. It's a great big cartoon drama, directed by Stanley Kubrick, with Kirk Douglas at his most muscular as the slave gladiator Spartacus, who leads a rebellion of his fellow-slaves against the might of Rome. Spartacus makes some conscientious speeches—out of Howard Fast (who wrote the novel) by way of Dalton Trumbo (who did the screenplay)—but there's so much else going on that it's easy to brush off the moralizing. Laurence Olivier is Spartacus' antagonist, Crassus, a devious patrician who wants to rule Rome in the name of order—he is designed as a supersubtle fascist. Crassus is a wonderfully gaudy character: he takes Tony Curtis, a young "singer of songs," as his sexual favorite, but he also has a fancy for the slave girl whom Spartacus loves—Jean Simmons. She has never been more beautiful, and the emotions that appear on her humor-filled face are blessedly sane. Peter Ustinov is superb as a slave dealer, who along with his grovelling sycophancy and his merchant's greed has his resentments; and Charles Laughton, amusingly wide in his toga, is a wily old Roman senator. (The two of them have a chat about the beneficial effects of corpulence.) As a gladiator who is Spartacus' friend and who is forced to fight him, Woody Strode has the quietest, most elegant physical presence in the movie. The large cast seems to be having a high good time; it includes Nina Foch, Herbert Lom, John Ireland, John Dall, John Hoyt, and John Gavin as the young Julius Caesar, and Charles McGraw, who has a strongman-of-the-comics jaw, like Kirk Douglas's, as the sadistic master of the gladiators. After the rebellion, Spartacus' group of men, women, children, and animals march to the sea, and it's like a giant kibbutz on the move; they're all hearty and earthy and good to each other—a bunch of picnicking folksingers. Is Kubrick dozing at the controls? He wakes up sharply. Crassus, who has taken command of the armies of Rome, is out to kill the spirit of revolutionary fervor; suddenly, Spartacus' people are confronted with a demonstration of Roman might—acres and acres of soldiers in perfect military formation. Cinematography by Russell Metty; music by Alex North. Hearst's San Simeon was used for some of the locations. (196 minutes).—P.K. (Ziegfeld.)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze—The bloom is off the shell. The plot hinges on the mystery of the chemical muck that transformed four tiny terrapins into budding superheroes. Michelangelo, Raphael, Donatello, and Leonardo are disappointed to learn that their "secret origin" is a simple industrial mishap. Everyone else should be, too. This overly slick sequel has a funny credits sequence portraying Manhattan as a movable pizza feast; later on, a double-talking scientist (David Warner) creates a couple of gaga ooze mutants (more good work from Jim Henson's Creature Shop) who goose up the action. But the director, Michael Pressman, and the writer, Todd W. Langen, can't think of any better climax than having the turtles and the new critters duke it out on a dance floor. Splinter (the noble super-rat) and Shredder (the Darth Vader-like villain) are back, along with a barrage of puns and oddball exclamations. The artful grunge is gone—and so's the edge. The whole movie is bright yet colorless. Worst addition: a karate kid (Ernie Reyes, Jr.). Most annoying substitutions: Paige Turco for Judith Hoag and (as featured rap star) Vanilla Ice for M. C. Hammer.—M.S. (Loews Astor Plaza; April 30-May 1. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through May 2, matinées only.)

Truly, Madly, Deeply—With Juliet Stevenson, Alan Rickman, and Michael Maloney; directed by Anthony Minghella. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Plaza; starting May 3.)

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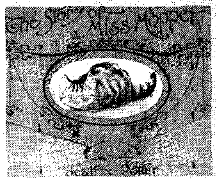

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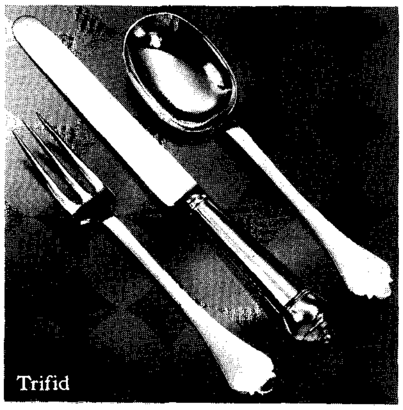

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THE
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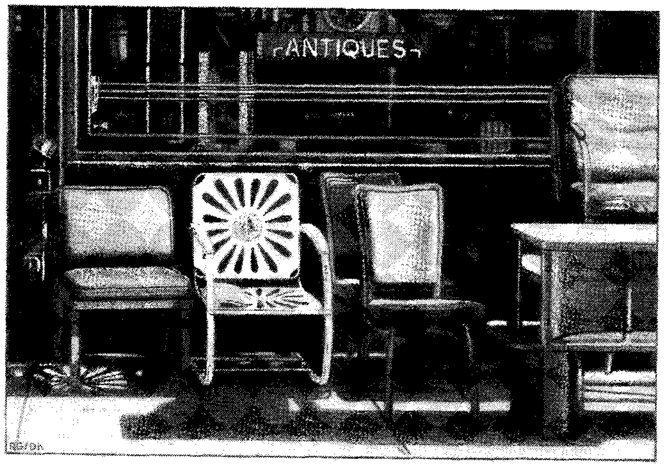
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

FIVE years have now passed since the accident that made Chernobyl a household name, yet the world still does not know how much damage Chernobyl did. *Glasnost* notwithstanding, most senior Soviet officials have done their best to suppress the full truth about the accident. They have ordered that its environmental and health effects be underreported or kept secret, and they have yet to release convincing figures on the total number of fatalities. According to a recent estimate by Dr. Robert Gale, who has treated many Chernobyl victims, between two thousand and twenty thousand people will die in the next fifty years as a result of the accident. And John Gofman, emeritus professor of biophysics at Berkeley, predicts that Chernobyl will eventually cause between fifty thousand and two hundred and fifty thousand deaths in the Soviet Union. Moreover, he believes that there will be an equal number of fatalities outside the Soviet Union, because, while Soviet citizens received the highest doses of radiation, the number of people exposed beyond the country's borders was far larger. All this is in addition to the untold thousands of people who have suffered or will suffer such non-lethal illnesses as anemia and immune-system disorders, not to mention the enormous damage to the area surrounding the reactor, about a thousand square miles of which had to be evacuated.



It is tempting to blame flaws in the Soviet economic and political system for Chernobyl. The nuclear-power lobby in this country has argued along these lines ever since the disaster occurred. This position has the double virtue not only of being accurate in many respects—as the Russian nuclear engineer Grigori Medvedev shows in his new book, "The Truth About Chernobyl," the reflexive secrecy and pervasive incompetence within the Soviet nuclear enterprise made a major accident all but inevitable—but also of implying that such a thing could never happen elsewhere. The historical record, however, suggests that the Soviet and the American experiences in attempting to master atomic energy over the past forty years have been far more alike than not.

This point emerged time and again during a conference on the environmental and health effects of nuclear-weapons production which was held last month at the University of California at Irvine. The conference brought together over ninety nuclear scientists and anti-nuclear activists from the Soviet Union, China, and the United States who were, in the words of John Whiteley, the U.C. professor who organized the gathering, "deeply committed to progress on peace, security, and the environment." The Soviet and the Chinese delegations included numerous high-ranking official representatives, but the conference was boycotted by the United States Department of Energy.

The dual themes of a common atomic history and joint current responsibility were stressed at the outset of the conference by the keynote speaker, Nikolai Vorontsov, who is the Soviet Cabinet member in charge of environmental protection. He urged that the United States and the Soviet Union join in leading a global campaign to stop all nuclear-weapons testing. It was the United States and the Soviet Union that led the way in nuclear testing, he pointed out, and together they are responsible for putting six hundred megatons of radioactive fallout into the earth's atmosphere, and also for spurring the testing programs of China, Great Britain, France, and India. "Excuse me for putting it this way, but we are all members of the same mafia," Vorontsov said, arguing that unless all the nuclear powers stop testing at the same time, nobody will stop. The Soviets have sharply reduced their own testing, Vorontsov added: they instituted a unilateral test ban in 1985, which lasted eighteen months, and have conducted only one test since 1989. He attributed the most recent reduction principally to the strong popular opposition to testing which has grown during the past three years, saying that the main Soviet test site, at Semipalatinsk, about three hundred miles west of the Soviet border with Mongolia, "is for all practical purposes not working anymore, because of a huge grass-roots movement." Nevertheless, he said, he is certain that testing will continue as long as the United States and others test. After referring to an American underground test in Nevada on April 4th, he warned, "Every one of your tests is a gift to those in our military-industrial complex who advocate continued testing."

As numerous speakers at the conference noted, the perverse mutuality of interest between the Soviet and the American nuclear establishments dates back to the earliest days of the Cold War, when the nuclear-arms race quickly became a self-reinforcing process, and environmental and health consequences were ignored in the name of greater production and for the sake of national security. Perhaps the most striking example of mutuality followed the catastrophic accident that took place at the Soviet nuclear-production site of Kyshtym in 1957, when a radioactive-waste dump exploded, spewing twenty million curies of radioactivity—four times the amount produced by Hiroshima—over the surrounding countryside. This accident may rank as the single worst disaster of the nuclear age, yet it was kept secret for decades by both the K.G.B. and the C.I.A., each of which apparently feared a well-informed domestic population as much as it feared the enemy arsenal. The C.I.A. did not acknowledge Kyshtym until the late nineteen-seventies, after Zhores Medvedev, a dissident Soviet biologist, published an account of the accident in Britain; the Soviets didn't begin releasing information on it until 1989.

Again, the temptation is to assume that such horrors could not happen in the United States. But something distressingly like them, although on a much smaller scale, did happen at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, in Washington State. Some three hundred and forty thousand curies of iodine 131 was leaked into the atmosphere at Hanford in 1945—a dispersion that was kept secret until activists forced the release of nineteen thousand pages of government documents in 1986. The difference was that this act was not accidental but deliberate: Hanford officials were looking for the simplest way to get rid of waste. Its effects on a downwind population of approximately thirteen thousand five hundred people have yet to be fully documented but are known to include thyroid problems and other common symptoms of radiation sickness. "Because the country was more concerned with Communists than carcinogens, the weapons complex was preoccupied with secrecy and withheld virtually all information about environmental releases and worker exposure from the public," Richard Belsey, a physician at the Oregon Health Sciences University, in Portland, told the conference.

The global situation has changed so dramatically since the accident at Chernobyl that April 26, 1986, seems at once both an eyeblink and a lifetime ago. That Saturday morning when the No. 4 reactor at the Chernobyl complex exploded, Mikhail Gorbachev had been General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for barely a year, and in this country Ronald Reagan was still riding a wave of clamorous bipartisan adulation. When Gorbachev went on national television sixteen days later to acknowledge the extent of the disaster, he was still viewed with deep suspicion by many in the West. It would take the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Warsaw Pact, and revolutions in Eastern Europe and the Soviet republics, to show that his policy of *glasnost* was both genuine and probably irreversible. Today, however, as if to illustrate the impermanence of human glory and ambition, Gorbachev is besieged on all sides, often by the very people who originally welcomed his reforms, while Reagan languishes in retirement. Erstwhile dreams of the Cold War's giving way to a time of peace dividends and ecological healing have been punctured by the realities of the Persian Gulf War. Yet the world does seem poised on the verge of a new era, and there may be no issue that more clearly defines the character of that era than how we as a species choose to deal with the technology represented by the charred Chernobyl reactor—a twisted hulk that will remain intensely radioactive for hundreds of years.

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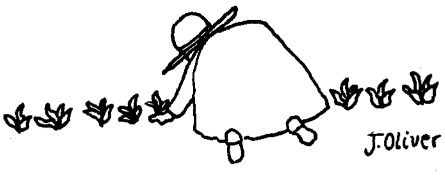
Correction

THE Museum of Natural History is renovating its collection of dinosaurs, and the other day a landmark event of sorts took place there: the head of the brontosaurus, long an object of controversy among paleontologists, was finally removed. This is the famous, almost iconographic dinosaur head: round, goofy, with a smile full of lovable teeth—the head that inspired all the cartoon brontosauri of our childhood. The trouble with it is that it's the wrong head. This head actually belongs to the camarasaurus, a smaller, squatter relative. The correct head is a good deal more sinister—more alligatorlike, with a slender snout full of dangerous-looking teeth.



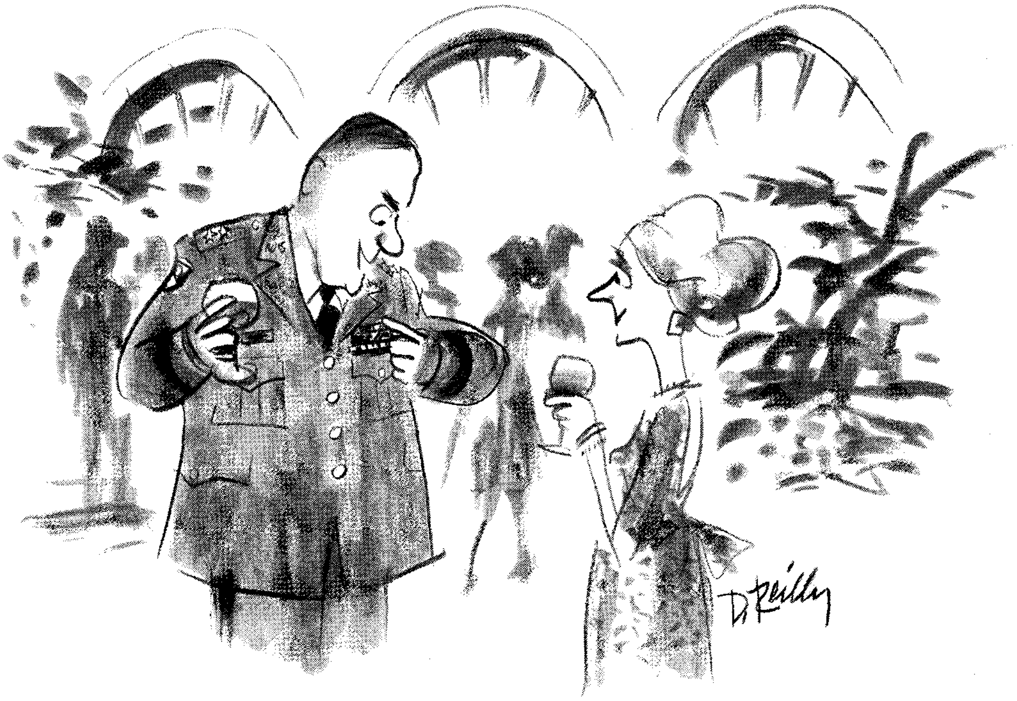
The correct head was sitting on a table to one side. The great beast was secured by guy wires as its old head, framed in scaffolding, was about to be unbolted. Standing by was Phil Fraley, the man who builds dinosaurs for the Museum. Earlier, in his office, Fraley had shown us photographs of his constructions, by way of explaining what he does. "See, this is an allosaurus chasing a camptosaurus," he said, pointing to a photograph of two skeletons in action. "And, see, with that foot structure I had to go ninety degrees, then sixty, then twenty to get the subtlety of that twist."

In the Hall of Early Dinosaurs, Fraley, who was assisted by his mount staff—three young men in leather aprons—said he foresaw no problem in removing the head. "It's going to be nothing like carcharodon megalodon," he said, pointing to an empty wall where the giant jaws of a prehistoric shark had been mounted. "That was two thousand pounds of unreinforced plaster, with the real teeth in it." He added that moving some of the early mammals out of their hall had also been difficult. "The Irish elk was a mother, because of the size of the rack on it. We didn't know whether to disarticulate it or move it in one piece. And the giant sloth! Now, the giant sloth was tough."

"Hey, who gets to keep this thing?" a member of the mount staff, who was standing on a raised platform, asked, looking down at the doomed head.

"I do, man," Mark Norell, the curator of the dinosaur collection, said. "It'll go with my elephant's foot."

The thick shellac on the bones, burgundy-colored with age, shone dimly in the gloom. We admired the elegant blacksmithing that had gone into joining them together—a lost art, according to Fraley. We took a last look at the condemned murals running around the top of the room—white chalk



"And this one is for being wounded by the media."

sketches on a deep-blue background, showing the dinosaurs in the flesh, heroically posed. We tried to imagine what the room must have been like in February, 1905, when this brontosaurus, the first really large dinosaur ever mounted, was unveiled to the world.

Thanks to the Museum's staff, and to a book called "The Bone Hunters," by Url Lanham, we knew why the wrong skull had got stuck on the brontosaurus in the first place. The story goes back to the late eighteen-hundreds, the golden age of bone hunting, when paleontologists were the popular equivalent of astronauts. In 1877, it seems, two large deposits of fossilized bones of many dinosaurs were found in the badlands of Wyoming. The bones were so large and numerous that they inspired a sort of bone rush. The two great paleontologists of the day—the Big Bone Chiefs, the Indians supposedly called them—were Edward Drinker Cope, of the United States Geological Survey, and Othniel Charles Marsh, of Yale. They competed bone for bone, rushing to make up new names for the dinosaurs as fast as they dug them up. Eventually, they began attacking each other in print, in a famous exchange of letters which was published in the New York *Herald* in 1890. Marsh accused Cope of mounting the head of an elasmosaurus on its tail. Cope accused Marsh of mistaking a saurian bone for an ordinary buffalo horn.

Marsh's team found the first brontosaurus, at Como Bluff. The skeleton was almost intact; only the skull and a few other bones were missing. In his haste to publish his discovery, Marsh suggested that a skull discovered some miles away was the right one. In 1898, Henry Fairfield Osborn, a big bone chief of the next generation, headed an expedition that discovered the Natural History Museum's brontosaurus, at Bone Cabin Quarry—named for a cabin there that a sheepherder had built out of dinosaur bones. It, too, was missing its head, and so Osborn directed the Museum's chief preparator, Adam Hermann, to sculpt a plaster copy of the Marsh brontosaurus's skull.

In 1975, two paleontologists working at the Carnegie Museum with a third brontosaurus proved that Marsh's brontosaurus was wearing the wrong skull, and therefore so was Osborn's. (By then, the brontosaurus itself had been scientifically discredited, too. The dinosaur that Marsh had named brontosaurus was actually a larger version of an apatosaurus, a dinosaur he had described a year or so earlier.) The heads of four other mounted brontosauri (in New Haven, Pittsburgh, Laramie, and Chicago) were changed years ago, but New York had taken its own preglacial time. Now, at last, the day had arrived.

At ten, Phil Fraley signalled to his staff that the old head's last moment had come, and they began unbolting it. It was rolled to one side, slid along the beast's iron spinal cord, and plopped down on a platform. The staff crouched around the head for the benefit of some newspaper photographers. We hoped someone might say, "We do it wrong, being so majestical, to offer it the show of violence," or words to that effect. Instead, a reporter called out, "Hey, anybody know what the New York state dinosaur is?" Nobody did.

Public Service

DAVID SHINER is the starring clown at Le Cirque du Soleil this season, and the audiences are crazy about him. According to the souvenir program, eighty-five per cent of those audiences are adults, of whom eighty-four per cent are university grads and seventy per cent are between the ages of twenty-five and forty-nine.

Enter Mr. Shiner, in mufti. For Mr. Shiner, mufti means a black leather motorcycle jacket and five-pocket jeans. He's casing the crowd as it files in. He's looking for props. Mr. Shiner likes to find such things as cameras, umbrellas, bald scalps, beer bellies. Notice how he can practically stick his nose into a woman's purse without the owner's registering a thing. At one point in the first half of the show, his clown character leaves the stage, goes out into the audience, runs his handkerchief over a few pates, and plunges his hands into a few coiffures. Other things he does: sits in your lap; slings his long, lean legs around your shoulders and then hoists himself onto your head; tosses your briefcase into the next section; tosses your date into the next row and snuggles up to you himself; delivers mimed critiques of outfits that do not consist of black leather jackets and five-pocket jeans. At one performance, Mr. Shiner grabbed a half-filled box of popcorn from somebody in an aisle seat and showered the contents over the rows behind. "I'm looking for some sort of response," he told us later. "When I push a guy, I love it when he pushes me back. Then we can go somewhere. There's no technique involved. It's just one human being to another human being." During the intermission following the popcorn incident, one human being, who looked like a ten-year-old boy, said to another human being, who looked old enough to be his mother, "Mommy, when he threw that popcorn over there, that was mine!"

Mr. Shiner's big number comes in the show's second half. He enters with a prop silent-movie camera while a couple of helpers bring on a facsimile of a door, and he explains in mime that he's going to make a silent movie.

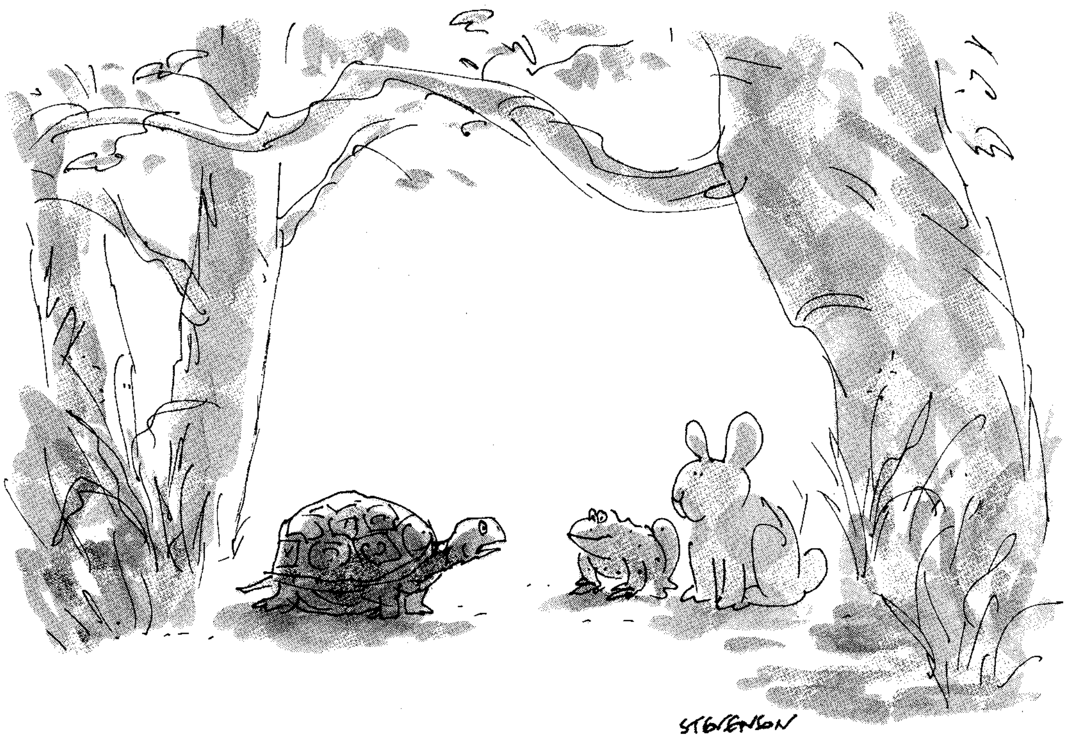
Now, here we're going to put *you* in the picture. Say you're an attractive young woman with a relaxed face. Mr. Shiner is making a thumbs-up gesture your way; he's beckoning you up onstage. You'll do it? Good. Now you're a handsome young man, wearing a coat and tie. You're not quite as relaxed as the young woman, but you wouldn't turn down fifteen minutes in the spotlight, either. Up you go. Mr. Shiner picks two more men for the scene. One is low-key and conventionally dressed; the other wears a sweatsuit. O.K., here's the plot as Mr. Shiner demonstrates it. The handsome young man is going to make passionate love to the young woman. The low-key man is going to knock on the door of the place where the couple are going at it. Then he's going to burst through the door, take in the scene, pull a prop revolver from his pants pocket, and fire away. The fellow in the sweatsuit is going to start things off; he's to be a member of the camera crew. In Mr. Shiner's private world, the camera crew is male, scratches at the groin area, and spits before snapping the clapper board for a take. Now Mr. Shiner is showing you your moves. If you weren't going to mess up, do you think you would be funny? If you weren't going to look stricken at the prospect of rolling around on a stage, laminated to a perfect stranger, do you think that an adult audience composed of eighty-four per cent university grads would be shelling out thirty-six fifty to see you? Maybe in draping your arms around the young woman you suddenly feel like a jerk, because you realize you kind of like her, but so what? So what if the young man sinking down with you, hip on hip, happens to be the first guy who ever got this close without your knowing his name?

"They know I care," Mr. Shiner said later of his audience colleagues in the movie scene. "They know they can trust me. They might almost die, of course, but maybe we'll learn something there, too." As Mr. Shiner sees his work, he's performing a public service. "People need release," he said. "When I was a kid, it struck me that people weren't telling the truth—speaking their feelings—because they'd be rejected. But what an individual deeply, deeply feels is the most beautiful part of him." After a moment's pause, he went on, "One year is usually the max for this kind of act, though. It's too stressful to work with people like this every night, on the line. There's no moment when I can turn off emotionally. I also had to go through a lot myself to develop the character of the clown: it represents me when I come up against my own limitations, my own fears. You know, being an idiot is not funny."

Miracle Fibres

WHILE we awaited the arrival of Katarina Witt, the world-famous twenty-five-year-old German figure skater, we walked from window to window of the Pegasus Suite and looked out over New York. The Pegasus Suite is on the sixty-fourth floor of 30 Rockefeller Plaza, and it has terrific views. We saw Central Park, the Empire State Building, Queens, and so forth, and we gazed upon the teeny heads of all the people who were not, on that particular day, having lunch with anybody famous.

After we got tired of the windows, we walked around in the middle of the Pegasus Suite. We neglected to count the tables, but there were a lot of them. Du Pont had just hired Katarina to be an adviser and spokesmodel for its new Sports Products Group, and it had invited some people to meet her and learn about a new line of sports apparel. That new line was represented in the Pegasus Suite by a long-sleeved pink leotard, some knee-length black leggings, and a pair of huge-looking beige figure


STEVENSON

"Please! I am neither teen-age, mutant, nor Ninja."

"This is sort of my little homage to the American farm woman."

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skates, all of which were being worn by a plaster mannequin that was bony and attenuated and looked less like Katarina than like Twiggy in Army boots.

After a pretty long time, a Du Pont executive stepped up to a microphone and said that Katarina would enter the Pegasus Suite at the appropriate moment but not yet. He talked about the greatness of Katarina, then introduced another Du Pont executive, who talked about the greatness not only of Katarina but also of Du Pont's synthetic fibres. Then we watched a videotape of Katarina skating. Then Katarina herself appeared. She was smiling quite a lot, and she was wearing a dark fake-velvet outfit made of Lycra and Micromattique. Lycra is Du Pont's trade name for spandex, which has been around for many years. Micromattique is new. It is not shiny, and it is extremely fine—in fact, twice as fine as silk. If you make a ready-to-wear garment out of Lycra and Micromattique, the garment will be so soft and light and stretchy that you probably won't believe it.

When Katarina took her turn at the microphone, her voice was quavery. We looked at the faces of other people in the room, and we could tell that they were thinking: Hmmm, speaking in public makes her nervous, but winning Olympic gold medals doesn't; with me, it's just the opposite. Still, Katarina did a good job of describing the importance of synthetic fibres in her life both on and off the ice. When she finished, we tried to use our eyebeams to pull her into the empty chair directly to the left of ours, but we accidentally got a tall man wearing a green sweater instead. Katarina ended up three seats away. That was too far for us to hear what she was saying, so instead we listened to Du Pont's director of apparel marketing. He said, "Today, you have the retailer standing up and saying, 'Branding is important to me.' Do you think you would have heard that five years ago?" When a woman sitting on our right saw that we were taking notes, she made various hand signals to the director of apparel marketing and then began talking to us enthusiastically about synthetic fibres. It turned out that she was a P.R. representative of Du Pont. She said, "Cotton is great, but it will break your heart. It shrinks, it sags, it bags, it doesn't fit well, and you need to iron it. The baby boomers had cotton for twenty-five years, and they loved it—loved it—but now they're taking care of it themselves, and they want fabrics that *behave*."

Toward the end of lunch, a large number of Du Pont employees began asking Katarina to autograph black-and-white photographs of herself wearing clothes made of Du Pont fibres. While she was doing this, the two people sitting between Katarina and us got up and went away, and a woman asked us whether we would like to sit next to Katarina. We said we would, and we moved over. For a long time, we just drank water and stared at her back, which was the part of her that was closest to us. Once, we looked over her shoulder, and noticed that she seemed to be signing her name "Katarina Ditt." Using mental telepathy, we tried to convey to her how different we were from all the selfish bloodsuckers who were keeping her from her dessert. Some of this seemed to get through to her, because when she turned around to reach for another pen she glanced at us and smiled in a very friendly way, making us realize that friendliness, and not music, is truly the universal language.

When all the autograph seekers had gone away, a man from Du Pont's publicity company pretended to interview Katarina while a camera crew videotaped them. The man wanted Katarina to say, "Since Lycra provides complete freedom of movement, it's one fibre I rely on when I perform." That was something she had said during her opening remarks, but now she had trouble remembering her exact words, and had to keep looking at a script. Then the man who was pretending to conduct the interview forgot to pretend to write down what she was saying, so they had to do it again.

By now, it was pretty late. Almost all the reporters and Du Pont employees had gone back to work, and waiters were clearing away empty plates. We hadn't said anything to Katarina yet, but we could tell that we were just about to think of something. Suddenly, though, a woman came over and led Katarina away to have her picture taken with some Du Pont executives in front of the mannequin in the big ice skates. One of the executives, a man wearing tinted glasses, stood behind her and gave her an embrace that looked a little like the Heimlich maneuver and did not appear to be exactly what Katarina had in mind. We decided that it was time for us to leave. On our way out, we paused to watch two men unscrew the arms of some mannequins that had been wearing a new line of synthetic intimate wear, for which Katarina is also now the spokesmodel. Then the men began to unscrew the mannequins' torsos, and we went home.

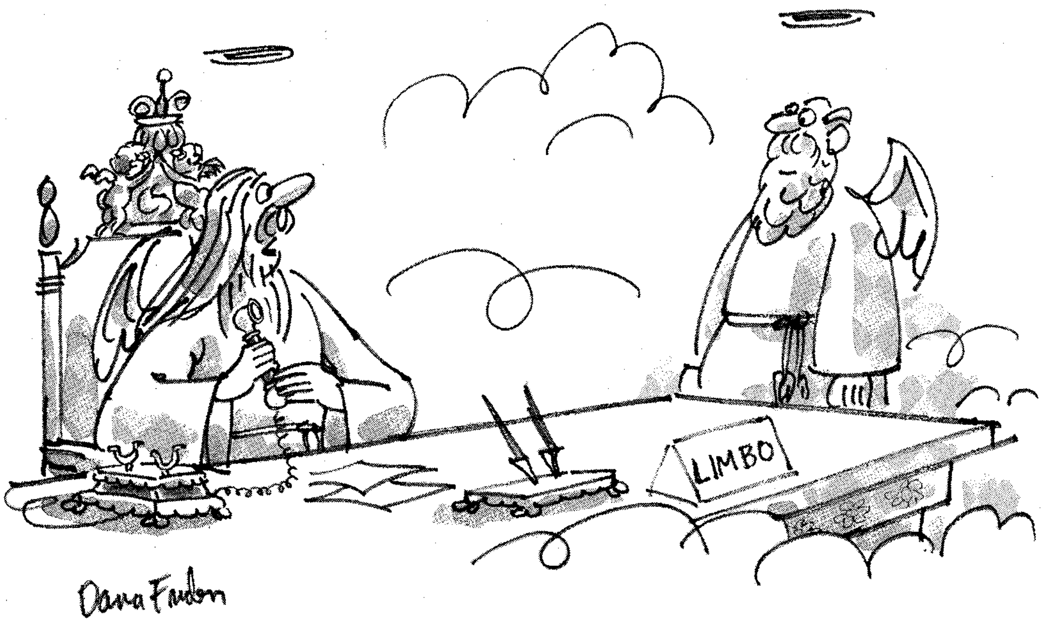
FALLING ASLEEP UP NORTH

FALLING asleep has never struck me as a very natural thing to do. There is a surreal trickiness to traversing that in-between area, when the grip of consciousness is slipping but has not quite let go and curious mutated thoughts pass as normal cogitation unless snapped into clear light by a creaking door, or one's bed partner shifting position on the remarkably noisy sheets. The little fumbling larvae of nonsense that precede dreams' uninhibited butterflies are disastrously exposed to a light they cannot survive, and one must begin again, relaxing the mind into unravelling. Consciousness of the process balks it; the brain, watching itself, will not close its thousand eyes. The brain, circling in the cell of wakefulness, panics at the poverty of its domain—these worn-out obsessions, these threadbare word games, these pointless grievances, these picayune plans for tomorrow which yet loom, hours from execution, as unbearably momentous. Life itself, that agitation of electrified molecules, becomes a captivity, a hellish endless churning, in which one is as alone as Satan, twisting and turning and boring a conical hole in the darkness, while on every side the wide world gently, blessedly snores.

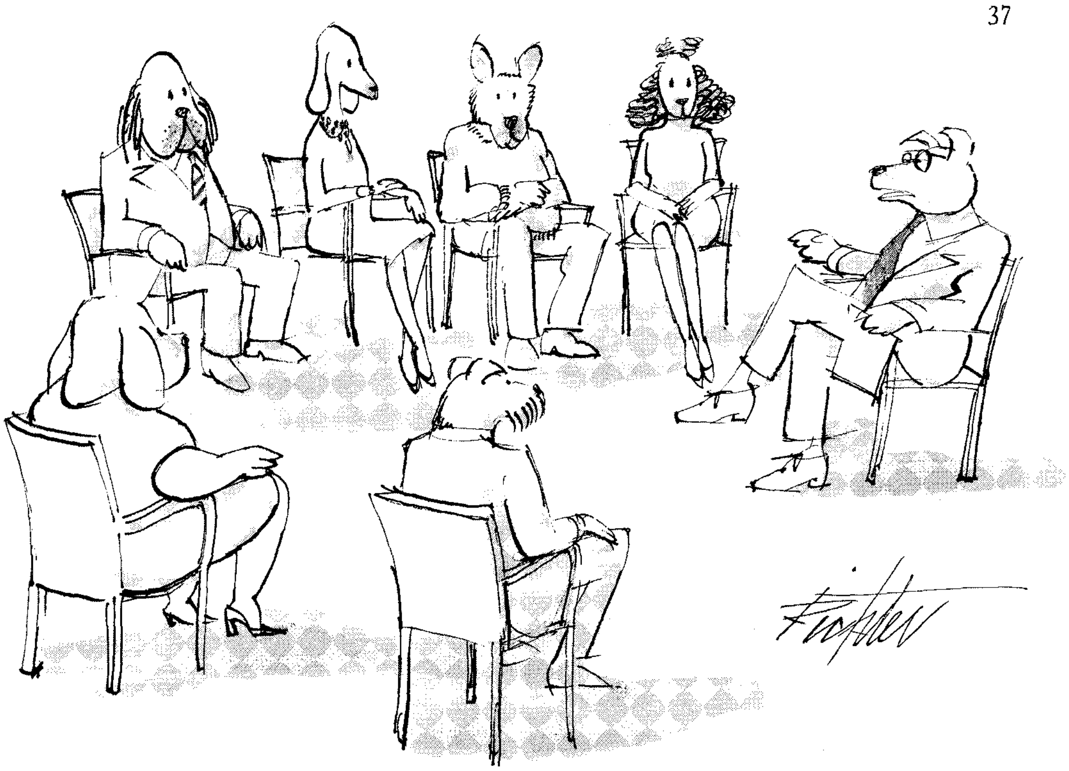
One such night breeds another; wearily stumbling through the day, you arrive in bed at last and the same electric barrier has been switched on, the same invisible shell bars the way into sleep. From over twenty years ago I recall a spell of such sleepless nights ending. It was in 1967, a year of riot and expanding quagmire but, in my own tiny corner of North American domestic life, noteworthy for Expo 67, a World's Fair in Canada to which my wife and I had promised to take our many small children. Our launching pad for the drive to Montreal was my wife's parents' summer house in Vermont, an old farmhouse up a dirt mountain road so steep that in one section, unless you had floored the accelerator at the bottom and made a wild, fishtailing run for it, the car wheels would begin to spin in the gravel near the top and you had to back down and try again. The house was surrounded by pinewoods reputed to be haunted by bears, and my father-in-law, a theologian so liberal that he considered both Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr to be neo-orthodox, had been accustomed by years of delicate health to having poised around him a household at all points respectfully alert to his comfort. It made for a lot of tiptoeing and unexpressed tension. Yet I couldn't really blame bears or my father-in-law for my insomnia. Maybe it was the hard bed, a horsehair mattress supported by ropes laced through the maple side rails, or the stark moon-drenched mountaintop silence, or some internal romantic conflict whose terms I have forgotten. I was a passionate creature in those years, with surges of desire shaking my bones like loose bolts in the undercarriage of the old Ford Fairlane we bounced up the gravelly hill. My wife felt so sorry for me in my sleeplessness that, on the second morning, she begged a sleeping pill from her mother.

Her mother said of course. She thought nothing of it. Sleeping pills were a dime a dozen to her. She was, as theologians' wives tend to be, an oddly free spirit, her one eye on permanent wink from the irritating smoke of the cigarette constantly in her mouth, and she had reached that happy advanced age when medical science no longer scruples at prescribing addictive drugs. My in-laws' medicine cabinet—nicely made of yellow oak, with a mirror whose bevelled edge threw prismatic rainbows around the sunny country bathroom, into the long metal tub, diagonally across the bare plaster walls and nappy guest towels—brimmed with chemical remedies for the pain of life. Carefreely, my mother-in-law waved me toward the bottle holding the two-tone capsules that induced sleep. I accepted one, and later stole two more, scarcely believing that a single pill could quell the turmoil of my midnight brain.

Do I remember this right? Why would I have felt the need to steal what was as blithely given as I have described? A certain affection that existed between my mother-in-law and me clings to the incident, heightening the gloss of the green-and-white capsules, inviting me to linger here in the shade of the prose, evoking those unexpected bathroom rainbows which were one of the few elegancies of the austerely furnished, often robbed house. Once the snowmobile became common, annual break-ins occurred; before, the house's remoteness had protected it all winter. Heavy vines, as I recall, hung from the shingled eaves, darkening the long side porch. In the room behind this porch there was a big wooden loom gnawed by porcupines for the salt that had come off people's hands when people still used looms, and shelves of abandoned books, including an old-fashioned encyclopedia



"It's Amnesty International. They want to see the people we're holding."



"O.K., who else has experienced the best-friend relationship as inadequate?"

• •

whose weathered spines I once, in my Vermont idleness, rubbed with chalk, so the identifying letters—"A-Ang," "Nev-Ost"—could be read again and the obsolete texts, crinkled pages smelling of damp winter isolation, systematically consulted. She was sexy, my mother-in-law, with her thinning gray hair permed, in tight curls against her scalp, and her quick-heeled, slightly tottering walk, leaving a smoke trail behind her in a room like a bit of skywriting. Her handwriting was squiggly, too—crackling with energy. There was a mild current between us that did not exist, strangely, between her voluptuous daughter and me, or (I felt) between her distinguished husband and her.

Come to think of it, the sleeping pill in my imagined hand may have come from her husband's cache. This was the drug-happy sixties, and the two of them had pills for every contingency: pills to put them to sleep and pills to wake them up, pills to get their bowels working and pills to reverse the effect, pills that played upon their nervous systems as fluently as a harpist's fingers upon the taut strings. Old age, as encapsulated in the sunny medicine cabinet, looked like a party: all bets were off, the sky was the limit. With those of us still of childbearing, child-rearing age, the medical world was stingier, asking us to tough it out and maintain chemical purity, for the good of the race. Our doctors smugly denied us sleeping pills, and tranquillizers, however hard we begged. We *were* allowed, though, the Pill itself—the anti-conception tablets that had brought on the sexual revolution that might have been what was keeping me awake. They came on toylike little cardboard wheels, twenty-one to a cycle, that encoded for women from Berkeley to Burundi when to take and when to skip. Once a woman I had slept with for a few glorious days of sexual tourism handed me, as we parted forever, with a little laugh, her emptied pill disk. I had come at the end of her cycle. We would never make a baby. She was, like my former mother-in-law, tiny—just five feet tall. Small women, my tall mother used to say, make the world go round. The very thought of it turned her forehead and throat red with indignation. My limited experience has borne this out: small women are the best, more concentrated. This woman's parting laugh was debonair, brave, and sad, for we had done something unforgettable for each other, tourists or not.

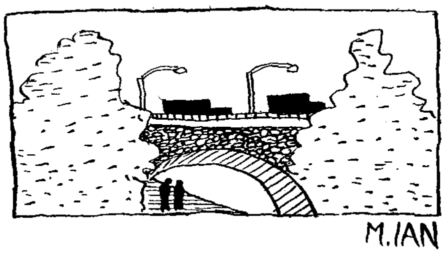
Yet I don't seem to have taken my mother-in-law's sleeping pill, because when my wife and I packed up the car and left Vermont I was still groggy with insomnia; its glaze lay on everything, giving the summer day and the flatness of Quebec a glaring unreality. Vermont and extreme upstate New York seem the end of the world, a final thinning, and then north of them there appears this great city, with fancy restaurants and cathedrals and chic women speaking two languages. Temporary villages had been constructed around the city to accommodate visitors to the Fair: rows and miles of little boxes set down in muddy, flat areas that had perhaps been golf courses or rugby fields. We arrived toward evening, the four children cramped and hungry but steeled to have an exceptional time, in an actual foreign country, at an international exposition whose photographs had been in all the papers. It was raining. We must have eaten, somewhere—friendly, fast food. What I remember is getting into my assigned corner of our thin-walled box, with rain drumming on the flat roof close above my head, and while my children were still bumping around and disputing their territorial claims in this new world falling headlong into the most delicious sleep of my life. This little box somewhere north of reality, my dependents all crowded around me, was the entrance at last to the heavily defended underground kingdom of sleep.

THIS can't be right: why wouldn't I have taken the sleeping pill the night before, back in Vermont, and been well rested? Perhaps I have compressed, in the way of a fictionist, two separate bouts of insomnia, on two trips to Vermont. I didn't seem to need the pill in Montreal. Still, I certainly am right about falling so satisfyingly, so hungrily and surely asleep in the little temporary cabin—sleep suddenly become delicious, edible, a huge piece of shadowy cake one can't wait to devour, toppling into its crumbly depth without hesitation. We fall *into* something, falling asleep, not out of things. Dreams are already there, beckoning; were sleep an unpopulated void, as null as a dead television screen or the surface of the moon, no one would want to go there. The great gleaming pond of the night would be full of floating ephemerids, each clinging in terror to his or her bubble of wakefulness.

So, unusually well rested, I was able to captain a successful raid upon the wonders of Expo 67, getting into the early-morning line for the Russian pavilion, with its marvellous miniature hydroelectric dam, and devoting the day to the lesser and duller pavilions, including the Canadian one, housed in what I remember as an array of giant tree stumps, and lingering at night with takeout cartons on a grassy bank so as to gain admission, with less than an hour's wait, to our own national pavilion, a Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome devoid of imperial boasting. Instead, it was jollily filled with Raggedy Ann dolls and giant images of movie gods—the U.S. made weightless for its visit to the moon two years in the future. And then back we went to the box in the mud for another night of blissful (as the phrase is) sleep.

Perhaps I like exiguous wooden shelters. In New Hampshire, once, I fell asleep under a Ping-Pong table while a game was being played. Again, there were many children about—mine, and those of the male friend whose ski house we were in, and friends of those children. We had skied all day, and upon our return and having a drink and eating, an irresistible avalanche of sleepiness swept me away. Since every square foot of the little house seemed to have a person or a piece of furniture in it, I crawled under the Ping-Pong table and fell asleep on the cement floor, with the paddles and the celluloid ball hollowly clicking overhead. It was a triumph of a sort, I could not help thinking at the time, yet my host was noticeably displeased. Just as he needed to fill his little house with furniture of all sorts—aluminum and plastic kitchen chairs in the living room, lopsided hassocks, scatterings of those teakwood Danish tables that you buy nested like Russian dolls, driftwood lamps, odd bits of carpeting distributed like postage stamps in a messy drawer—so he needed to cram his hours with activities. He couldn't take a bath without reading a magazine in the tub; he couldn't drive a car without turning on a symphony or a language tape. He had planned, after our day of skiing, an evening of organized games, and I, as the only other adult male, had been important to his plans. The pressure of his expectations may have been part of the weight of the psychic avalanche that had swept me away.

Possibly this memory also belongs to the sixties; it wears the psychedelic polychrome of that decade—there may have been a Peter Max poster on the wall, along with the obligatory watercolor mountainscapes and hunting scenes—and not the yellowing, sickly tint of the seventies. But it seems later than 1967: my children are bigger, to judge from the ponderous scuffling of their feet as they race around the Ping-Pong table, and my wife, though still there, somewhere far above the tabletop, has a decaying presence, a dim feminine phosphorescence on the edges of the memory. My host is present at full force, emanating sulky waves of disappointment that assault me as I fitfully wake and stir beneath the celluloid battering of Ping-Pong noise. He is somewhere near his prime—freshly divorced, resolutely bachelor. His felt displeasure leads me to reflect, as I shift position on the friendly cool cement, where perhaps a square of shag carpeting has drifted to pillow my cheek, on



FOR ALL THOSE WHO WAIT FOR TIME TO PASS

Six black herons flew northward;
the first fireflies flared up,

one by one, inside the heart of the evening.
(My friend T. would have said,

They find a green thought,

lose it and find it again,
time after time against the sullen,

unconvinced mass of shrubs.)

For whom do they glow?

For all those who wait for time to pass.
For all those who walk bent into the wind.

The old lady knitting for hours
without looking up. The dog who waits

all day under the tree for the shadow
to lengthen, for the first breeze

to swirl the dust in the yard, for rain to come.
The old Mexicans sitting so still

outside the rural bus station.
What are they waiting for? The bus?

Arriving or departing? Neither one.
They wait for life, a gift

abruptly thrust on them, to pass.

—LARS GUSTAFSSON

(*Translated, from the Swedish, by Yvonne L. Sandstroem.*)

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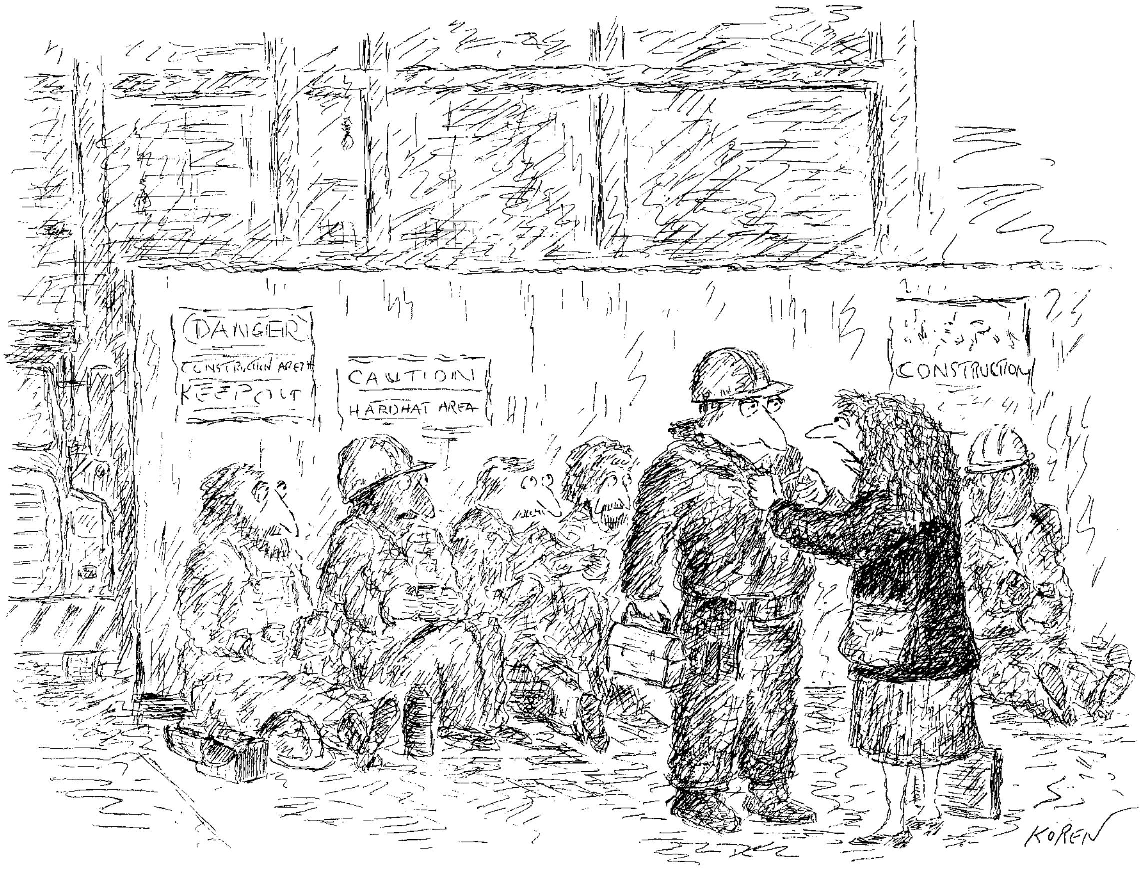
my role in his life: it is, I see for the first time clearly, that of an entertainer, of a hired jester, of someone expected to pay for his access to this jumbled ski house, with its electric heat and flimsy partitions, in coin of an unflagging energy and willingness to participate in whatever activities have been scheduled. Up to this moment, year after year, I have been willing, and adequately energetic; I don't know what has come over me—this miraculous sleepiness, this refusal to come out from under the Ping-Pong table. It is, in sixties style, a protest of a sort, this I also see. But I can't stop making it, and fall asleep again, on my little island of cement, as if on a bottomless column of cotton.



"I'm the kind of woman nobody calls pumpkin."

• •

Becoming a bachelor, my friend acquired open access to the women I had to covet in secret, in the town we lived in, to the south. What a strain it was, always being in love! I seem to remember a costume ball, my wife and I dressed in matching outfits—as Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, or as a fork and a spoon—and he escorting a fresh divorcée, she dressed as a Spanish male, with a black hat from whose circular rim small black wool balls hung. Her eyes, also dark, looked at me from beneath the row of swaying balls, and her teeth showed in a bite of a smile, as if to say, "Yours, too, could be freedom." And, again, after volleyball, in the summer sweat of it, and the long day's light, having had drinks on his porch, all of us couples at last guiltily hurrying home to give the children Sunday supper, yet one lone woman lingering on the porch, lighting up another cigarette with a cocky twist of her ponytailed head, the rusty old porch glider giving off a squeak beneath her, her blue-gray eyes flicking past mine like a cocky flick of ash, her thighs thrusting from her little denim skirt with a somehow unnatural gloss, as of plastic piano keys that have replaced gaps in the original worn ivory. Both these women he was taking from me were little, with small bright bones, solid hips, and pulses beating rapidly as birds' breasts.

As for the era of my falling asleep under the Ping-Pong table, on second consideration, from the jaundiced tint of the memory, and the hormone-laden heaviness of my children's feet, it may be later than I thought; it may be the early seventies after all. It can't be the mid-seventies, for by then I had cast myself adrift and was exploring such bastions of freedom as laundromats and art-movie houses.

My present wife, once when I asked her how I had seemed to her in the midst of that dear old crowd, said, "Oh, like a dog who doesn't know he's being kicked."

"Really?" I thought about it. The image had a truthful ring that put me on the defensive. "I sound rather sweet," I said.

Masochism is as unfashionable now as aggressiveness was twenty years ago, but that's all right. Realities don't need to be named to exist. Being kicked is a stimulus, and when the stimuli stop we fall asleep. Insomnia is no longer one of my issues. As you age, the distinction between being asleep and awake blurs. My grandmother used to fall asleep in a rocking chair, between one rock and the next. Once in a great while—too rousing a rental video, or a cup of coffee the hostess solemnly swore was decaf—I enter the old terrain, the three-o'clock twists, the four-o'clock disbelief that this is happening to me. It is thrilling, in a way—like reading Kierkegaard again, or Maritain. I console myself that I am storing up fatigue toward the next night.

And I rarely make it north of Massachusetts now. At a certain stage in life, which we pass into as if crossing the unmarked border between two friendly countries, the drift becomes southerly—toward New York, Washington, Florida. Going north, it turns out in retrospect, was too much effort. One can curl up and call it a day anywhere.

—John Updike

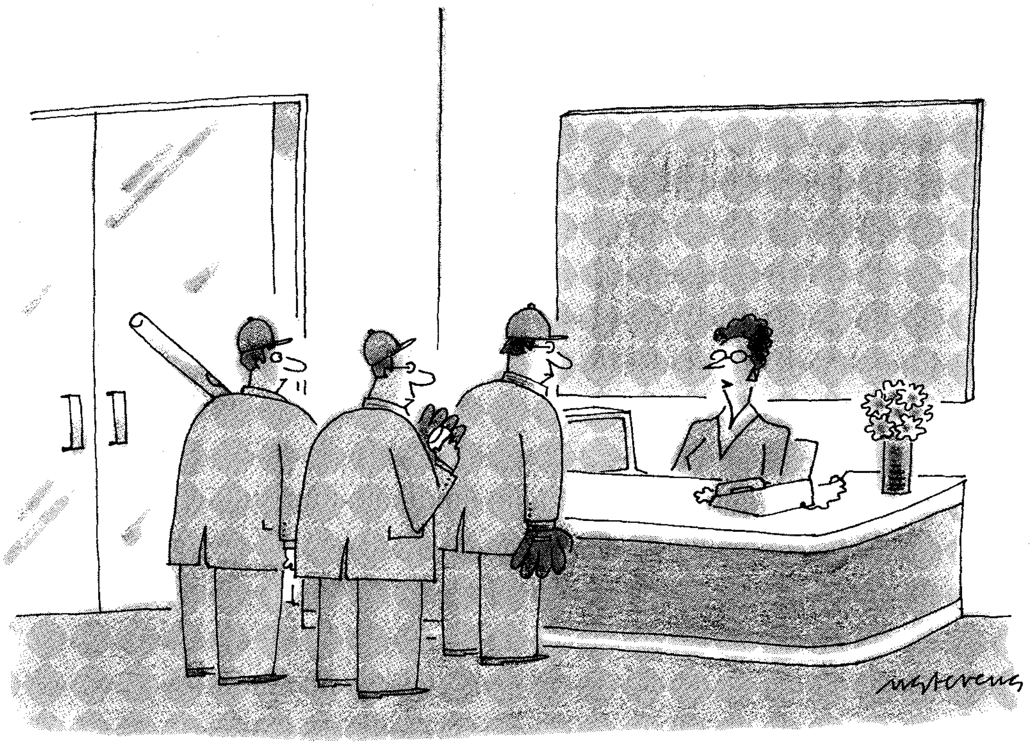
EASY KEEPER

Foster Coleman, legally separated from his wife, joined by elaborate custody arrangements to his son, is flying alone to Priest Creek to spend a week with Lily, a woman he barely knows. He met her on a pack trip last fall, but that was right after he and his wife split up, and he was myopic with grief and guilt. He remembers only her weathered skin, her long, straight, gray hair, and her way of listening a little too closely to whatever he said. He could stay in a hotel close to the ski slope and invite Lily for a dinner or a day of skiing. That might be easier for both of them, but Foster has no skills for being alone—even in his own apartment. There's something about coming home to empty rooms that can force him out again for a beer, or sometimes to his mother's, where he sleeps in his boyhood bed. How much worse to be alone in a hotel room, with only a TV and the sounds of strangers in the next room for company.

The plane from Denver to Priest Creek—a Dash 7, designed for short runways—rises sharply, then drops. The air seems filled with invisible mountains and valleys, barriers to the traveller, which make his stomach curdle and make him regret ever venturing here. Foster grips the armrest. Meg, a woman he works with, was supposed to come with him—Lily's really her friend—but at the last minute she was offered a recording date she couldn't turn down. She says she'll join him in a couple of days. It's typical of her to blithely send him off to this frozen place for a week of awkward loneliness.

Meg suggested the trip one Monday when they were recording a commercial Foster had written for a new shampoo. Foster was coming off a hellish weekend. He'd had to pick up Nicholas, his son, at nine on Saturday morning and his Friday-night date, someone called Gemma Rose, had refused to go home. (Bella—that's his mother—says women with double names tend to expect too much.) He'd let Gemma Rose stay, thinking she'd be a help with Nicholas, but, instead, she competed with him for Foster's attention. Then, at midnight on Saturday, Foster's wife was on the phone screaming that Nicholas couldn't sleep—he'd been traumatized because Foster had a strange woman sleeping in his bed—and that she was going to take Foster to court.

Meg said that Foster looked awful, and he said he didn't have any time for himself. "You have to get away," Meg said.



"Mr. Reynolds can't go out to play until he wraps up the Walderson contract."

When Lily meets him at the airport Foster says, "I could get a room in a hotel—if you feel funny, since Meg didn't come and all."

"I like having someone else around the place," Lily says. "You can help me with the lambs." She motions for Foster to throw his bags in the back of a vintage Chevy pickup; it's got a white paint job that looks as though she did it herself. There's straw in the back of the truck, not clean, with what might be animal droppings mixed in. He lays his skis and bag, new and expensive, in the part of the straw that looks freshest.

Lily raises sheep—Foster remembers now. On the pack trip, he never focussed on what she did, other than ride a mule with enviable authority. Now that he knows he will be staying alone with Lily, there are all kinds of questions he needs the answers to.

He opens the door and a large, woolly dog rears up from the seat.

"Gravy, get in the back," Lily says in a conversational tone. The dog leaps past Foster and scrabbles up next to his luggage.

Foster resists an impulse to brush off the seat before getting in. He looks for a seat belt; there isn't one. "So," he begins, "did you grow up here?"

"No."

"Oh, really?" When she doesn't reply he adds, "How long have you lived here?"

"Since '70."

"1970. About the time they opened the ski area?"

"That's right."

"Are you a big skier then?"

"When there's time." She pulls into a feed-and-grain place. "Wait here," she says, jumping out. She comes out carrying a large sack over her shoulder. Foster starts to get out, too, then hesitates. She might be the kind of woman who is insulted when a man tries to help. Lily smiles and surrenders the bag. "Thanks," she says. She's smaller than Foster remembered—short and slight, but strong. The sack is heavy. Foster drops it onto the straw.

As Lily drives, Foster looks out at wintry hills, at long, un-broken drifts gleaming in the sun, and thinks of Nicholas, who has to make do with the bruised scraps of snow he finds in the park near home.

"God, it's beautiful," he says. This is a poor substitute for the lament crouching in his throat.

"We had a ninety-inch base, but it's melting fast." She downshifts to get up a rutted mud road, and animals—sheep? goats?—scatter before them. "My mouflons," she says. "It's an ancient breed from Sardinia. They jump over any fence I put up, so I don't bother trying. The breed is older than fences. It's O.K. Everyone knows they're my sheep."

She pulls up in front of a house of weathered boards, with an overhanging tin roof. The house, along with the plain wooden barn and sheds, makes him yearn for something that's gone or that never was. "It's paradise," he says.

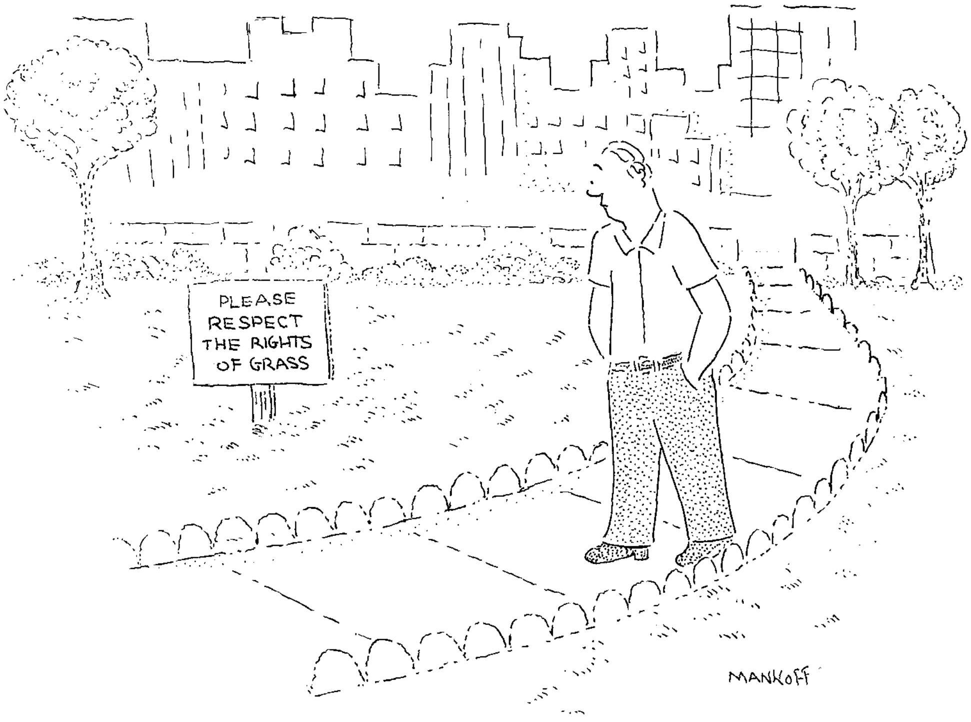
Lily has already jumped from the truck. "Take your stuff in—it isn't locked." She strides off to the barn, the sack across her shoulder.

BELLA would say the house could stand a good dusting. There are stained-glass doors on the kitchen cabinets, potbellied stoves in the two sitting rooms that flank the kitchen, pots of ivy in macramé holders hanging in the windows. Notices are stuck on the refrigerator door with magnets: fairs, mule-training groups, a sheep-breeders' conference. Foster peeks in the freezer and sees hand-labelled packages of meat, boxes of ice-cream pops, some Sara Lee cakes.

Lily comes in, stamping snow off her boots, and catches him snooping. Foster walks away from the refrigerator, feeling like a foolish, prying city boy. But she forgives him with the ease of someone who's had a lot of practice. "There's a bottle of Colorado wine there and some Canadian Club, if you want a drink," she says. She's even smaller now, without her parka and boots, but her voice is large and deep—an outdoor voice.

"Maybe I'll try the Canadian Club." Feeling Western, he pours himself a slug of whiskey over ice. "Can I fix one for you?"

She reaches past him to get a Coke out of the refrigerator. "It will just make me sleepy. I have the feeling I'm going to have to deliver a lamb before the night is out."


PLEASE RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF GRASS
MANKOFF

Foster grimaces as he tastes the whiskey. "I would have thought they could take care of that themselves."

"Sometimes I have to help. I've got a couple of first-time mothers out there. I might have to stand a newborn up, help it find the teat."

She pulls a casserole out of the refrigerator and places it on the stove. "Leftover shepherd's pie. The lamb's homegrown."

"You eat them?" A stupid question, he realizes even as he says it. Somehow he'd thought Lily was raising the sheep as pets, or maybe for the wool. He hadn't considered the end result of sheep raising.

She treats his question with more respect than it deserves, and explains that she usually sells the lambs to 4-H'ers to raise and show at fairs. The lambs are judged twice, once in the ring and again after they've been slaughtered. "That's when you see how good the judge was, when you see the carcass. It's the final test."

Foster decides that he likes sitting at Lily's round table while she puts dinner together and talks about sheep. He likes it that he can feel this comfortable far from his usual environment. Of course, the whiskey is helping. He's always been attracted to country women. His wife grew up on a farm in West Virginia. There were five kids in the family, each one named after a different state. The names turned out to be prophecies: the children all left home as soon as they could. It amazed Foster that Dakota, his wife, hadn't seen her family in years and had completely lost track of two brothers. Foster, an only child, speaks to Bella daily over the phone, and sees each of his parents (who amicably divorced after Foster left college) once a week. They're psychiatrists—Bella a child therapist, Philip a Freudian analyst. In Foster's family, moods were analyzed, differences talked out, consensus reached. In his wife's family, doors were slammed and people left for years without explanation.

Foster shows Lily a picture of Nicholas. She examines it under the light and says, "He doesn't look like you. The bone structure's different."

Foster takes the picture back, a little diffidently. He's used to having women coo over pictures of Nicholas—his widely spaced eyes, his golden hair. Lily has judged him with a breeder's eye.

"He's more like his mother's side. They're from West Virginia."

"Is that right?" Lily sets the casserole on the table. Her forearms are enormous, like a man's, shocking on her slight body. Her hands are thick and callused, with deep lines around the knuckles. She dishes up the lamb. "You should bring him next time. Kids love it here." When she talks she looks directly into his eyes, and it bothers him, because the conversation doesn't warrant prolonged eye contact. It makes him wonder what she sees or what she's looking for. Her eyes are scoured and rinsed by mountain air—practical eyes, for spotting a stray sheep on the side of a hill or examining a cut in a horse's shin. They aren't skilled in the sidelong glance, the quick downturn, the sly nuances that signal sexual attraction. Foster, on the other hand, is fluent in the vocabulary of courtship. He can usually predict in the first half hour whether an evening will end in bed or with a kiss at the door. He is rarely caught in an embarrassing misjudgment.

Lily eats quickly, efficiently, and then jumps up and says, "Oh, I better show you your room."

"Don't bother, just tell me—"

"I'd better look. I can't remember if there are sheets and towels. Bring your stuff."

At first, Foster feels a twinge of disappointment when he sees that his room is on the other side of the house from hers. Separate stair, separate bath. But, no, it's refreshing, he tells himself—a much-needed vacation to live this way with a woman, if only for a week. He'll help out. He'll be a friend, the perfect guest. "This room is great," he says. "Let me know if I can help you. I don't want to be in the way here."

LATER, washing dishes while Lily goes to the barn, Foster tells himself that Meg was right after all. He did need to get away. Already he's breathing more freely. It amuses him to be left in the kitchen while Lily's in the barn. Role reversal is restful once in a while. Maybe Lily will take the initiative, he thinks. He imagines her wiry thighs clasping around his waist, and spills too much detergent into the water, making billows of bubbles. Lily cautioned him against using too much soap, because of the septic system, so he turns the spigot on full blast and manages to get the suds down the drain before she returns. A little news on the television, and they're ready for bed—Lily because she'll be up later with a first-time mother she's certain will give birth tonight, Foster because he's still on New York time. Lily promises to wake him early to teach him some chores. Foster lays warm clothes beside his bed in anticipation, and then in the middle of the night—two-twelve, his watch says—he finds himself hastily pulling these clothes on and then hurrying downstairs, grabbing his boots, parka, all because Lily touched his shoulder and told him to come to the barn.

The cold stuns him. He forgets to breathe. All around him stars—thousands of them—flicker red, blue, yellow. These are not the sparse, remote blobs Foster sees far overhead in the city when he points out the Big Dipper for Nicholas. In this sky, they look like what they are, great boiling fires of heaven.

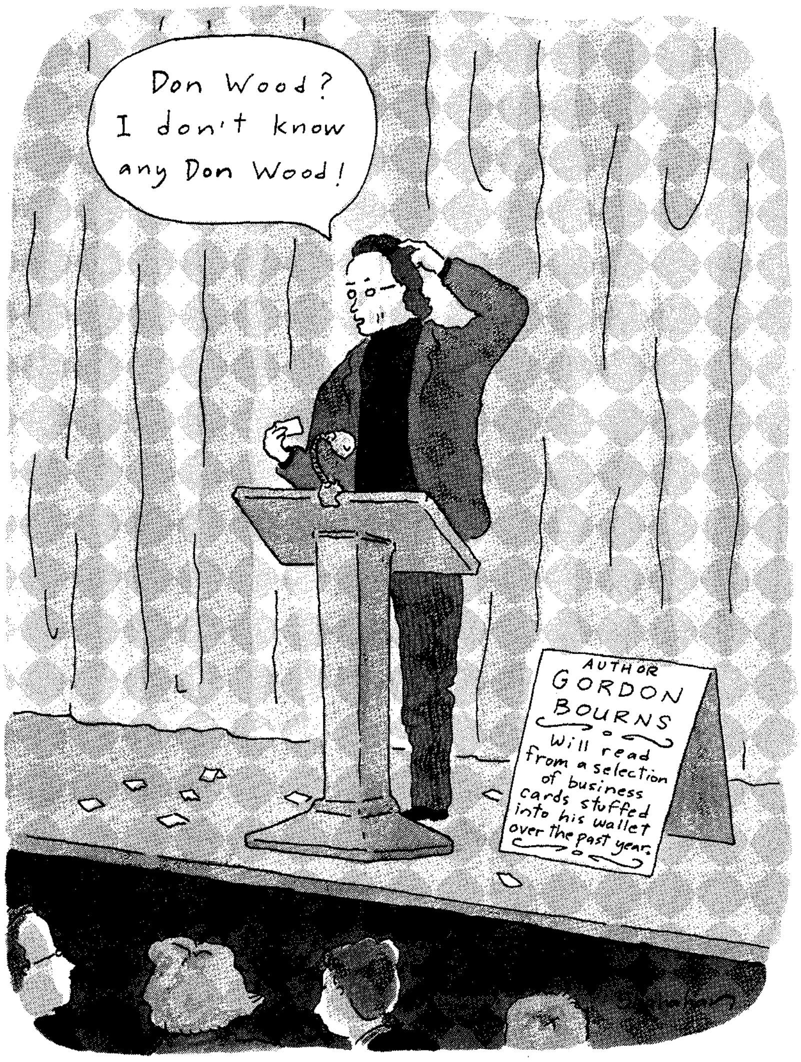
"Foster!" Lily calls from the barn. Suddenly Foster is fully awake. Lily has summoned him, and he has come. But inside the barn his stomach does a slow roll. The palms of his hands, the soles of his feet, prickle with an urge to crawl away.

His wife insisted that Foster be present at Nicholas's birth. They went to Lamaze class together. He learned so many ways to help—timing contractions, pressing tennis balls into her lower back—but when the actual labor arrived she wouldn't let him do anything but watch, helpless witness to her agony, and all the while she cursed him for putting her through it. She said words he'll never forget, couldn't repeat, even to Bella. The doctor laid a scrubbed, pink hand on Foster's shoulder afterward and said he was concerned—what was the story with his wife, had she wanted the child, would she be able to care for it?

"Foster!"

The smell of sheep dung and straw thickens in his throat. The barn is dark except for the light from one bare bulb hanging over a pen made of chicken wire, and the red glow of a space heater. Lily has thrown her parka to one side and she is rubbing her hands and forearms with Crisco oil. "She's having problems. I'm going to have to help her. If you could just hold her still from the front . . ."

The ewe is staring dully. Her back legs are rigid, stiffly spread. Foster looks away. He's never touched a sheep before, much less held one still. He places his hands where Lily tells him to and


Don Wood? I don't know any Don Wood!
AUTHOR
GORDON BOURNS
Will read from a selection of business cards stuffed into his wallet over the past year.

kneels close. They don't bite, do they?

Lily's arm is deep inside the ewe. She shuts her eyes. The animal heaves and shudders. Lily murmurs. Foster presses into the shoulders. A convulsive wave, and Lily draws her arm forth. Grasped in her hand, the bloody thing—the lamb. "Good girl, good girl," Foster says, stroking the ewe, embracing her. His face is wet with tears.

Lily lays the lamb on the straw so its mother can lick it clean. All business—quick, efficient. But she smiles at Foster. "Push her head down," she says. Foster guides the ewe's head to her lamb and she begins to lick. Lily tugs gently on the umbilical cord that still connects the mother to the lamb.

"Don't you have to cut it?" Foster asks.

"She'll bite it off, if she's good."

They watch the ewe for a while. Foster actually feels proud when she bites the cord. He pats her neck. She shudders, and the afterbirth plops out onto the straw. Lily cleans the ewe's rump then picks up the afterbirth and puts it down beside the lamb.

"What are you doing?" Foster asks.

"I want her to eat the afterbirth. It's good for her."

"You sure?"

"They do that, the good mothers. It's nourishing." She coaxes the ewe toward the red mess. Foster looks away.

Lily finishes wiping down the lamb, wraps it in a towel, and holds it close, to warm it. She does this casually, expertly. Foster remembers how the nurse wrapped and held Nicholas in a tight, football-size bundle and how his body would jerk and flail in the arms of Foster or his wife.

"Want to hold it?"

Before Foster can explain that he's really not very good at this sort of thing, the lamb is in his arms, bony and light. The heart beats fast against his hand. Then Lily takes the lamb from Foster and holds it against its mother. The lamb wavers. Its legs splay, then right themselves. Lily puts the teat in its mouth. It butts its head against the maternal belly. The ewe dances. Lily pats her neck and talks to her in soothing sounds.

Something bleats in the dark beyond the circle of light over the pen. They are surrounded by other ewes and lambs—shifting, nursing, witnessing. Births, Foster realizes, routinely take place in this barn. He feels giddy, as though he's come through something dangerous. He wants to see it all again, wants Nicholas to see it.

THE ewe catches a few mouthfuls of straw while her lamb suckles. New mother, new lamb. The instinct has kicked in, and they're acting like old pros. Lily rakes up the bloodied straw and puts down fresh, all the while explaining how she matched this female, who's an easy keeper, with a ram from a breed that produces a large percentage of lean meat.

" 'Easy keeper'? "

"They don't need as much feed as the others for the amount of meat they produce." Lily rubs the ewe between the ears. The lamb's ropy tail switches back and forth.

"I like the term 'easy keeper.' "

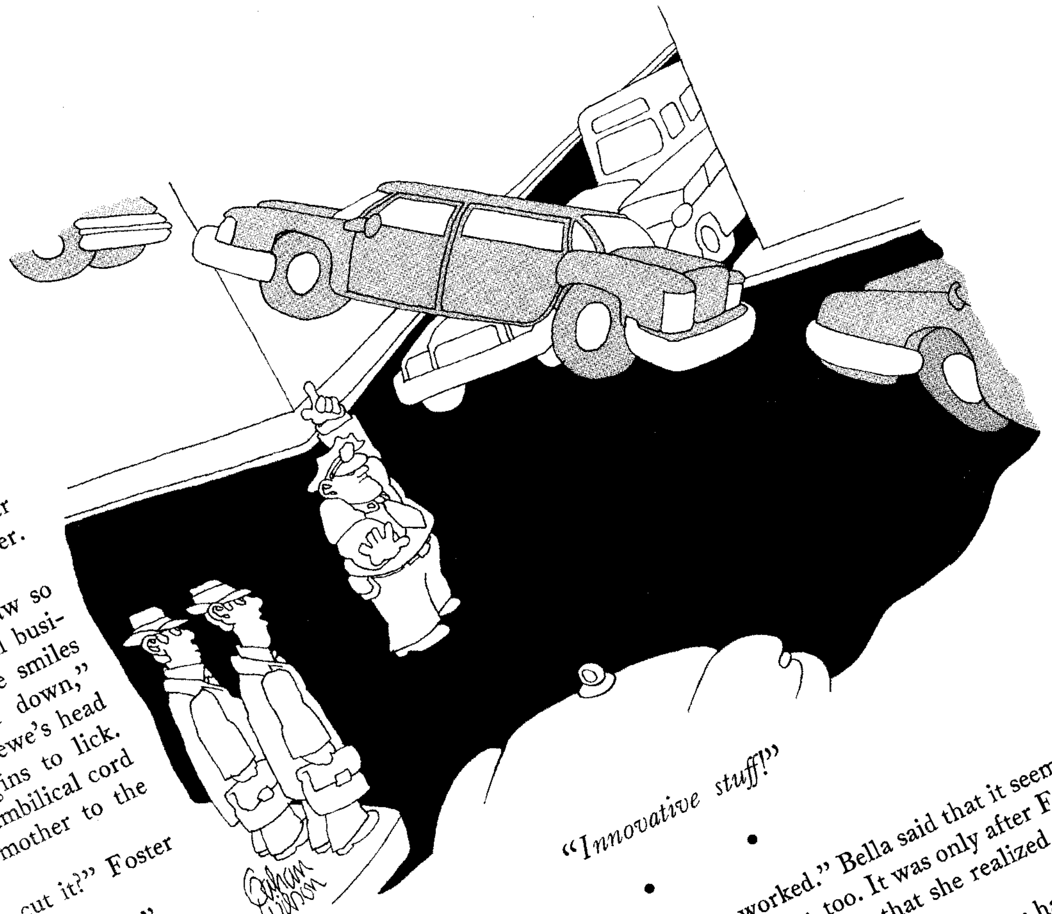
"You never heard it before?"

"No."

On a recent afternoon at Bella's, Foster accused his mother of having managed too well when he was growing up. "It seemed so easy, the way you two got along, the way I fit into your marriage," he said. "It ran so smoothly that I never had to think about how it worked." Bella said that it seemed easy to her, too. It was only after Foster left for college that she realized how hard it had been.

Lily has straw in her hair and blood on her parka, but she doesn't mind. Foster follows her out of the barn, already imagining how her hips will feel in his hands. He knows she'll let him share her bed, as easily as she served him the shepherd's pie, as easily as she delivered the lamb. He already knows how simple it will be and how they will fall asleep immediately afterward. The air is cold and smells of snow and faintly, Foster decides, of iron forged millions of years ago in distant stars. He fills his lungs, fills his brain, with oxygen to burn away memories, until he forgets he was ever married.

—MARY TANNEN



"Innovative stuff!"

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CORRECTIONS

MASKED PROTESTER WAS WRONGLY IDENTIFIED

A man was wrongly identified in a photo in Free Press editions Thursday. The man in the Brian Mulroney mask who protested at London West MP Tom Hockin's office was not Buddy Chatham of Kitchener but Buddy Kitchen of Chatham. The Free Press regrets the error.—*London (Ont.) Free Press.*

Hell, it could happen to anyone.

ANNALS OF GOVERNMENT

SERVING THE PRESIDENT

THE VIETNAM YEARS—I

IN the twenty-seven years that I knew Lyndon Johnson, from 1946 until his death, in 1973, my relationship with him went from that of a casual friend to that of a close associate and intimate adviser. Seven times, he asked me to serve in his Administration. When I finally agreed, in 1968, our relationship changed forever, in ways that neither of us could have anticipated.

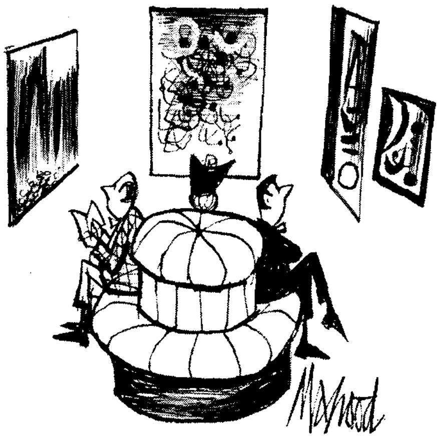
Let me put it simply: Lyndon Johnson was the most complex man I have ever met. He may also have been the most difficult. On occasion, he reminded me of a powerful old-fashioned locomotive roaring unstoppably down the track. His huge hands enveloped your hand in their grasp when he greeted you, and he gazed down at you with mournful eyes. I was always struck by his attitude toward his poor origins in the hill country of central Texas—his combination of pride, shame, and sensitivity. But he never forgot those origins, and the memory of them fuelled his commitment to social programs.

In dealing with people, Johnson could be astonishingly devious. I often had the feeling that he would rather go through a side door even if the front door was open. He could be a terrible bully, especially to those closest to him. But he could also be sensitive, both to other people's feelings and to his own excesses, and he would often try to atone for his overbearing behavior with acts of great kindness. He was, in a certain sense, a confidence man, yet his potential for greatness was so vast that one ached to be able to help him achieve it.

I think that deep within this outsized Texan was a small boy yearning to be loved by everyone, all the time. He did not want to accept the fact that in real life this is simply not possible. He was uncommonly hurt by people who questioned his motives, yet much of the time his behavior raised unavoidable questions, even in the minds of his closest friends. He had "as many sides to him as a kaleidoscope," former Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote to me in 1968, and presented "an unbelievable combination of sensitivity and coarseness, of understanding and obtuseness."

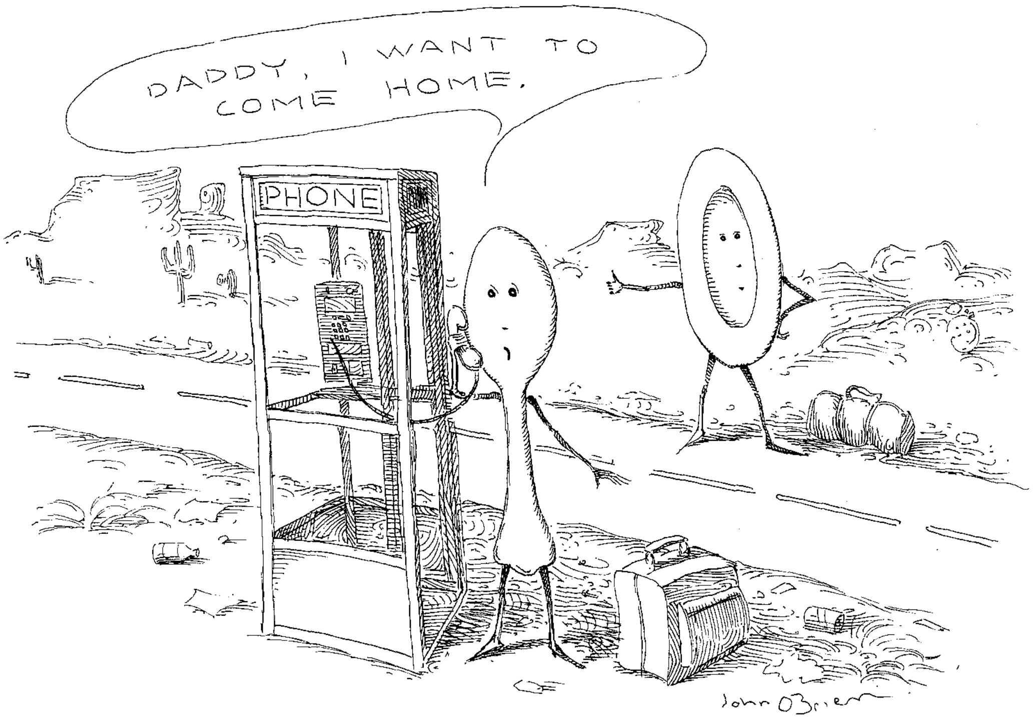
By the time Johnson became Senate Majority Leader, in 1955, the nation needed to address a series of pressing domestic issues. President Dwight Eisenhower soon showed himself unwilling to take the lead, and so created a situation made to order for Lyndon Johnson. Brilliant at the wheeling, dealing, and trading that are the lifeblood of Congress, he was probably the most effective legislator that the nation has had in this century. He was certainly the greatest legislator who has ever served as President. In domestic affairs, he showed a confidence, strength, skill, and boldness of vision unlikely ever to be matched. If, as many historians believe, he sought to use his legislative abilities to erect a monument to himself, without doubt he wanted that monument to serve a noble purpose.

Johnson understood political power in Washington better than any other President in my lifetime except Franklin Roosevelt. When Johnson became President, on November 22, 1963, he devoted his political skills to completing President John F. Kennedy's legislative program. Then, after he was elected in his own right, in 1964, he forged one of the most far-ranging legislative programs in history. Partly because he never forgot that he had been brought up poor in a poor region of the country, he was far more strongly committed than President Kennedy to domestic legislation and civil rights. I believe that if it had not been for Vietnam he would have been one of our most illustrious Presidents.



Johnson's landslide victory over Senator Barry Goldwater in 1964 was a moment of personal triumph for him. He was finally a President chosen by the voters. He felt that he was no longer under the shadow of the Kennedys. President Harry Truman had faced a similar situation after Franklin Roosevelt's death, but had confronted it quite differently. Like Johnson, Truman had been elated when the voters gave him their approval, in 1948, but, unlike Johnson, he had not been inhibited or impeded while he completed his predecessor's term by the fact that he was not yet an elected President. President Truman's attitude was simple: whether people liked it or not, he had the job, and he would do it as well he could. President Johnson, on the other hand, worried about his mandate—his legitimacy, although he never used such a term—and deferred most difficult decisions until after the 1964 election. Then, freed in his own mind from the constraints of an inherited Presidency, he could turn his colossal energies to the problems—most notably Vietnam and civil rights—that he had postponed for over a year. He possessed the legislative skills, the personal drive, and the congressional majority to achieve his noble domestic goals—provided that Vietnam did not derail him.

MY association with the most painful, tormenting event of my years in public service began in the late spring of 1965, when President Johnson asked me, as a private adviser, to participate in what proved to be a foreign-policy debate unmatched in importance since the one that preceded the nation's entry into the Korean War, in 1950. In the debate about Vietnam during the spring and summer of 1965, I argued as forcefully as I could against the huge escalation of our involvement which was being proposed by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and the American military. I amassed whatever lawyerly skills I had, argued my case, and lost—in a face-to-face debate with McNamara in the tranquillity of a summer weekend at Camp David, the Presidential retreat in the mountains of Maryland.


DADDY, I WANT TO COME HOME.
PHONE
John O'Brien

Vietnam was not only a tragic turn of history but also a cauldron in which good and able men of high integrity, acting out of solid and well-reasoned motives, went terribly wrong. They operated in a world nearer to the end of the Second World War than to the nineteen-nineties. Memories of Munich and appeasement were still fresh, especially in the minds of Secretary of State Dean Rusk and President Johnson. Also still fresh in their minds were the success that the leaders of the government had achieved and the danger they had faced in the Cuban missile crisis, in 1962. The Communist menace was palpable.

The essence of American policy, despite nearly two decades of domestic debate, remained varying versions of containment. I had been a participant in the creation of that policy, in 1947, but I did not believe that it applied to Indo-China. Even though the odds were heavily against my preventing an escalation that was supported by the top three members of the Cabinet, the entire military establishment, and most of the congressional leadership, I felt I had no alternative but to tell the President that I foresaw a calamity for the nation if he sent ground troops to Vietnam. To a large extent, my conclusions were instinctive. I did not believe that we were threatened by the internal war in Vietnam, and I was concerned that our chances of success were much too slim to justify the risks and costs that the undertaking entailed.

I had not opposed the early commitment to help the South Vietnamese with military and civilian advisers. The initial strategy—to help a new and small pro-Western, anti-Communist government resist subversion—seemed a logical and appropriate extension of earlier policies in Europe and Korea. Looking back in 1969, I wrote of the situation, "We had seen the calamitous consequences of standing aside while totalitarian and expansionist nations moved successively against their weaker neighbors and accumulated a military might which left even the stronger nations uneasy and insecure. . . . We had reason to feel that the fate averted in Korea through American and United Nations military force would overtake the independent countries of Asia, albeit in somewhat subtler form, were we to stand aside while the communist North sponsored subversion and terrorism in South Vietnam."

From the beginning, however, we had been constrained by the fact that our South Vietnamese allies were corrupt, inefficient, and poorly motivated. This fact was critical. In the final analysis, our objectives in Vietnam depended more on the capabilities of our allies in Saigon than on our own efforts. And the more we did for those allies, the more dependent and ineffectual they became. It was on this point that our policy would ultimately fail—something I did not realize at first.

It has sometimes been said that Vietnam was "the liberals' war." Since many of the most critical decisions were made during the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, there is a certain small truth lurking in this observation. But an understanding of the tragedy is not advanced by viewing events through a political prism. Every President from 1950 through 1975—three Democrats, three Republicans—made mistakes in Indo-China, and the congressional leadership of both parties supported almost every key decision.

During the Kennedy years, my own involvement in Vietnam was minimal. Though the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, of which I was a member, received occasional briefings on the situation in Southeast Asia, we concentrated on intelligence methods and organization rather than on the situation in the field. Our last discussion during Kennedy's Presidency took place on September 12th and 13th of 1963, at a time when a fierce debate was going on over whether or not to encourage a military coup against the increasingly unpopular South Vietnamese government, headed by the rigid Catholic strongman Ngo Dinh Diem. I had not been following the situation in Vietnam closely, and our briefing by the normally cautious and conservative director of the Central Intelligence Agency, John McCone, startled me. The situation in Vietnam had deteriorated so badly, he told us, that we might have to pull out altogether. Diem had lost all popular support except that of his home region and his fellow-Catholics, and could not win the war against the Communist guerrillas, who were steadily gaining ground. When McCone was asked about press reports that the C.I.A. was supporting a coup, he told us that although the C.I.A. was in contact with senior Vietnamese generals, we were not encouraging them. I do not know whether Lucien Conein, a legendary C.I.A. agent with a long career in Southeast Asia, who at the time was secretly working with General Duong Van Minh (known as Big Minh), was encouraging the coup that took place only six weeks later, but it seems unlikely that it would have occurred without at least tacit American approval. Certainly McCone should have known what was going on in Saigon, and if he did he had an obligation to tell us.

One area we failed to investigate during those early years of the American buildup was the growing gap between the optimistic reports of progress that were coming in through the official chain of command and the increasingly skeptical reporting by some of the journalists covering the war, notably the New York *Times* correspondents Homer Bigart and David Halberstam; Neil Sheehan, of United Press International; and Malcolm Browne, of the Associated Press. Even though those skeptical reports were based in part on the views of many junior American officers serving as advisers to the South Vietnamese Army, the Administration viewed the reports as a public-relations nuisance rather than as something that needed to be looked at carefully. The P.F.I.A.B. should have examined this early indication of what later came to be called the credibility gap, but neither I nor my colleagues suggested that we consider the question. It was a serious oversight on our part.

Lyndon Johnson did not want Vietnam to divert him from his domestic priorities, yet the war consumed him, and became his nemesis, just as surely as the First World War and the fight for the League of Nations consumed Woodrow Wilson. Although President Johnson had an excellent understanding of the political trap he was in, he never understood the war itself.

With the notable exception of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which Congress passed in August, 1964, Lyndon Johnson's personal imprint on Vietnam did not emerge until after he won the 1964 election. So strong was Johnson's sense of a difference between the unexpired term of John F. Kennedy and the term he had won on his own that although the regular bombing of North Vietnam had long been advocated by the military and by some civilians, it did not begin until the month following his inauguration. On February 6, 1965, following a bold Vietcong attack on American installations near the central-highlands city of Pleiku, he authorized a retaliatory air strike against North Vietnam. Within a few weeks, the original idea of carefully calibrated retaliatory strikes against the North was replaced by a program of sustained bombing. The program's code name was Rolling Thunder.

To my knowledge, the connection between bombing the North and sending American ground troops was not much discussed before the bombing began. But history sometimes turns not on what was considered but on what was ignored, and that was what happened in February, 1965. Although historians have paid little attention to this aspect of the decision, it was perhaps the greatest failure in the entire process. In none of the major discussions leading up to Rolling Thunder was the President told, either by the Joint Chiefs of Staff or by his Secretary of Defense, that once bombing of the North had begun the military would need, and demand, American combat troops—first to protect the American airbases from which the bombing was launched, and then, inevitably, to begin offensive operations against the enemy.

THE SEA OF SERENITY

The Sea of Serenity:
my mother's body: ashes:
the appearance of land, and the appearance of water.

Books by the fireplace, gold brocade and silver,
but love, oh love. Outside the door.

Earth said, *Eat*.
Earth said, *Shame*.

Mother, my first professor
of grass, of wet
finger holes in the clay,
of blue breast milk,

Mother, on my hands and knees,
face flat in the leaves,
I chomp after you like a horse.

—Jean Valentine

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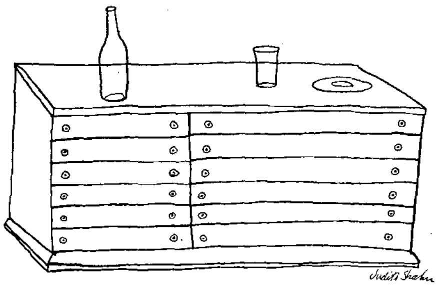
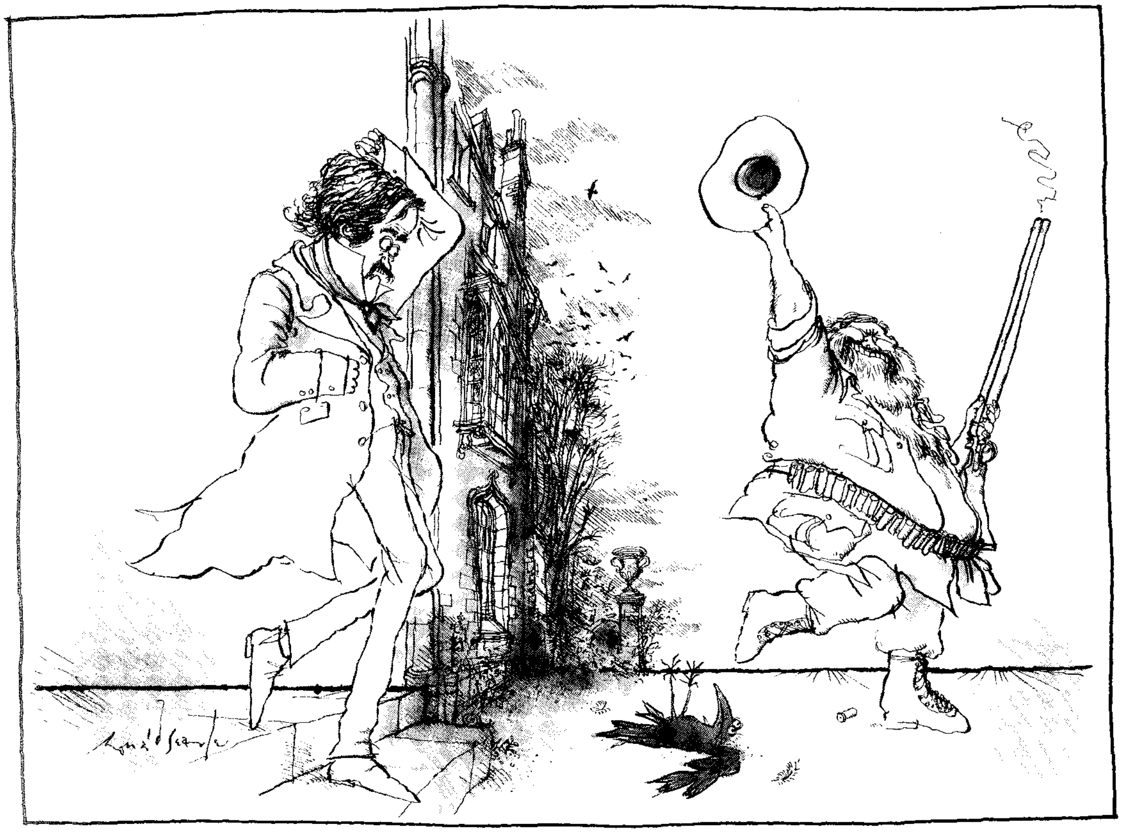


Hence in retrospect the February debate, restricted simply to the question of whether or not to bomb the North, had an air of unreality. Later, the American military leaders complained bitterly about civilian interference in such military decisions as the timing and the targeting of the air war against North Vietnam. But I believe that they themselves had committed a fundamental error in failing to tell their Commander-in-Chief that the bombing of the North would lead to requests for ground troops.

As for the President and his senior civilian advisers—especially those in the Defense Department—they should have been more persistent in questioning the American military. The respect that the military deserve for patriotism and courage should not blind civilian leaders to the biases and vested interests that are inherent in the military system and the military style. Three years later, when it was my responsibility, as



CROSSED PATHS

Edgar Allan Poe and Hemingway

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Secretary of Defense, to consider a request for more troops in Vietnam, I tried not to repeat this mistake.

At the beginning of April, 1965, I was drawn for the first time into the debate concerning the next steps in the war. By then a curious—and temporary—coalition in favor of bombing the North had sprung up between those who saw it as a way to avoid sending ground troops to Vietnam and the military, who wanted ground troops but at first asked only for a limited number to protect our airbases and other American installations.

A handful of people opposed any escalation at all. This small, outnumbered group included some "old Asia hands" at the State Department—notably Paul Kattenberg and Louis Sarris—and a few of those on the fringe of the debate, like John Kenneth Galbraith, our former Ambassador to India, and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield. But the opponents of escalation had only one strong adherent inside the Administration who had access to the President—the Under-Secretary of State, George Ball. Except for Robert Lovett and Dean Acheson, two of his predecessors as Under-Secretary of State, I can think of no sub-Cabinet official who has ever operated with more prominence and distinction than George Ball did during this period. A unique combination of factors gave him near-Cabinet stature. First, he clearly had the presence, the eloquence, and the intellect to serve at the Cabinet level. A lawyer from Chicago and Washington who had long supported Adlai Stevenson, Ball was also closely associated with Jean Monnet, the Frenchman who had devoted his life to creating what is now the European Community, and whose dream was a United States of Europe. A large, tall man with great style and self-assurance, Ball was extremely articulate and utterly fearless in expressing his opinions. I liked and admired him, though we were not close friends.

The key to Ball's unusual role was the latitude he was given by his superior, Dean Rusk. To his credit, Rusk, who liked and admired Ball, often took him to major policy discussions with the President on Vietnam, during which the two State Department men would disagree, politely but firmly. Later, when Ball's private dissents became public, the White House tried to describe his status as that of a "devil's advocate," but the description was not accurate. Ball was not playing a role; he was presenting his real views. He thought that the commitment in Vietnam was wrong. He argued his case with courage, clarity, rare prescience, and eloquence, but he had no high-level support. Soon, however, he would gain what he later called "support from an unexpected quarter"—me.

In early 1965, despite the bombing of North Vietnam, the situation continued to deteriorate. But President Johnson had substantial public support for his policies. Before the Vietcong attack at Pleiku, which resulted in the death of eight Americans and the wounding of more than a hundred, about forty-one per cent of the American public approved of his Vietnam policy; after the air attacks on the North, his approval rate soared to sixty per cent, the bombing itself was supported by eighty-three per cent, and seventy-nine per cent supported the goal of "keeping the Communists from taking over all of Southeast Asia."

In this atmosphere, General William C. Westmoreland, who was the American military commander in Vietnam, obtained approval for the deployment of the first American ground troops—sent ostensibly to protect an airbase near Da Nang—with comparatively little debate. On March 8, 1965, two battalions of marines, in full battle gear, waded ashore on the beaches south of Da Nang. To the amuse-

“Of course you’re a producer!”

• •

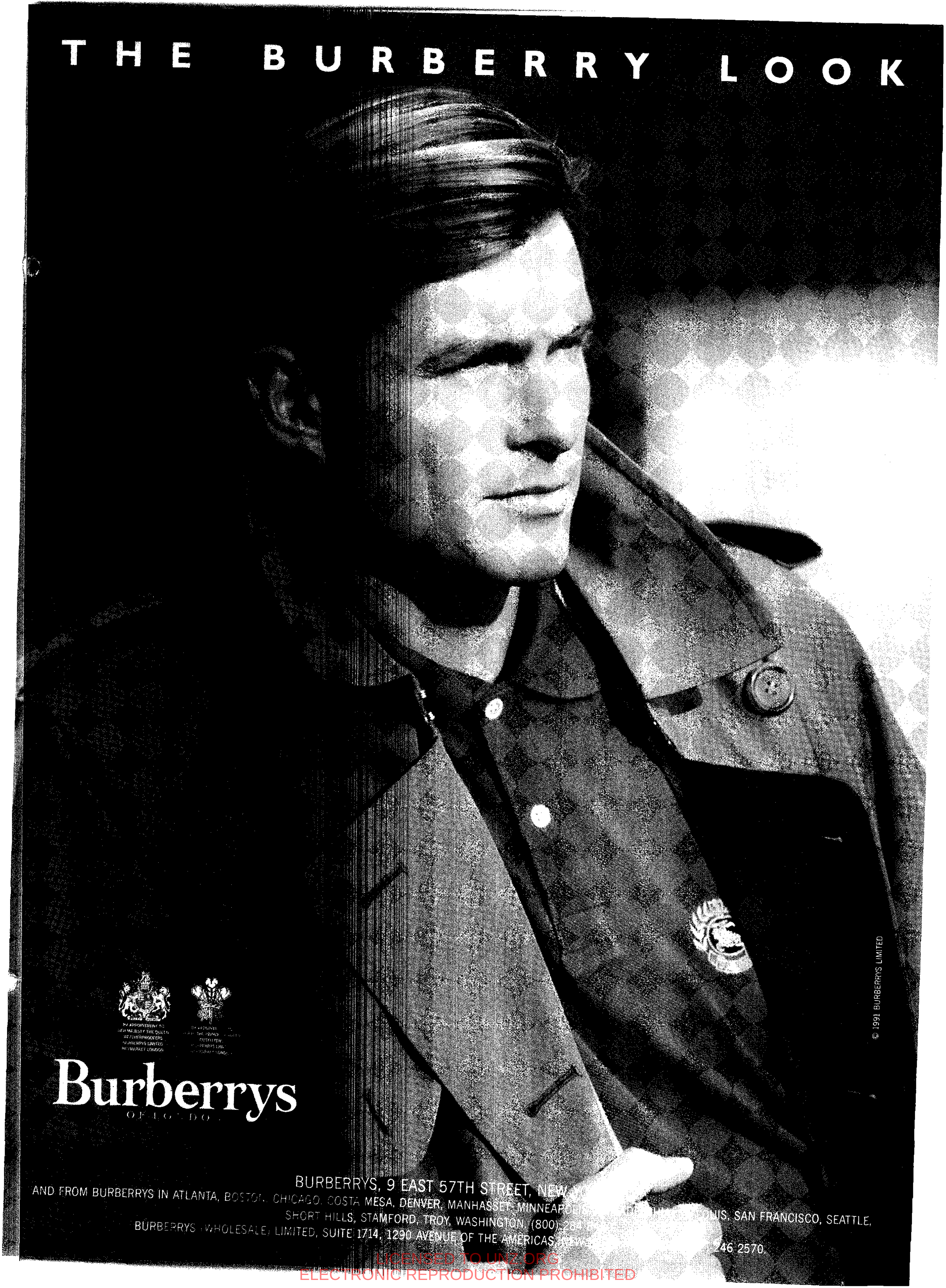
ment of everyone except the marines themselves, they were greeted by pretty young Vietnamese girls, local Vietnamese officials, and a few United States Army advisers holding up a sign that read “Welcome to the Gallant Marines.” Official spokesmen in Washington and Saigon said that the marines would simply defend the Da Nang airbase, but in fact plans were already being made for offensive operations.

On April 1st, the American Ambassador to Vietnam, Maxwell Taylor, attended a meeting of the P.F.I.A.B. He remained unshaken in his commitment to saving South Vietnam, but I learned at the meeting, to my surprise, that a few days earlier he had taken one unexpected position: he had opposed sending American combat troops there. Taylor, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had argued in several top-secret cables that if we sent combat troops to Vietnam the Vietnamese would “seek to unload other ground force tasks upon us,” and said that once we had started down that slippery slope there would be no stopping. He had gone on to state his belief that the American soldier “is not [a] suitable guerrilla fighter for Asian forests and jungles.” In putting this case forward, Taylor had been directly opposing his own protégé, General Westmoreland. Taylor’s views—a reversal of the escalatory recommendations he had made in 1961 to President Kennedy—had a considerable impact on me.

The day after Taylor met with the P.F.I.A.B., I saw President Johnson to discuss the search for a successor to John McCone at the C.I.A. I suggested a number of candidates, but they were passed over in favor of Admiral William (Red) Raborn, who had been in charge of the building of the first nuclear submarine. Raborn was not experienced in the intelligence field, and after an unhappy year he was replaced by Richard Helms, who had been serving as his deputy. In that April 2nd meeting, President Johnson also asked me to start following the situation in Vietnam more closely. He wanted my observations added to the recommendations now pouring in from every direction. During the next month, I looked carefully at Vietnam for the first time, with the assistance of Patrick Coyne, the executive secretary of the P.F.I.A.B., and he acted as my channel for information on the war for the next two and a half years.

On May 11th, President Johnson handed me a private letter from McCone and asked me for my reaction to it. Clearly concerned that if the letter was leaked it could add to the pressure he was already under, he enjoined me from discussing it with anyone, or even keeping a copy of it for myself. I returned to my office to study the letter. In it McCone argued that rapid and dramatic steps were necessary to prevent defeat. “As we deploy additional troops, which I believe necessary,” he wrote, “we [should] concurrently hit the north harder and inflict greater damage.” If we were not ready to do this, McCone said, we should not send ground troops to Vietnam. The powerful internal logic of McCone’s argument helped clarify my own thinking. In a certain sense, he was right: if Americans were going to take over the ground war in the South, they should be fully backed by heavier bombing of the North. With an expanded air campaign, there was also a greater chance of bringing the North into negotiations. As we had learned in Korea, a limited war would be hard for the American people to accept for more than a brief period.

But as I studied McCone’s suggestions I reached a conclusion exactly opposite to his. If the only way to avoid defeat was by the large-scale escalation that he was suggesting, then we should not escalate at all. The level of bombing he advocated would shock and horrify the entire world, and even he admitted that there was no guarantee we would prevail. I saw far more disadvantages in following his all-out strategy—among them worldwide opposition, high risk of failure, great loss of life on all sides, an open-ended commitment—than in looking for a way out before the costs of failure went any higher. As for the middle course—the one being pushed by McNamara, Rusk, and others—it seemed at that moment to combine the worst of both other scenarios: too little to turn the tide but enough to involve us more deeply. Besides, I had believed since the time of the Truman Administration that the United States should not send its combat troops to fight anywhere in the world unless we were convinced that our national security was at risk. I had then believed that our national security was at stake in Korea, but I was not persuaded that this was so in



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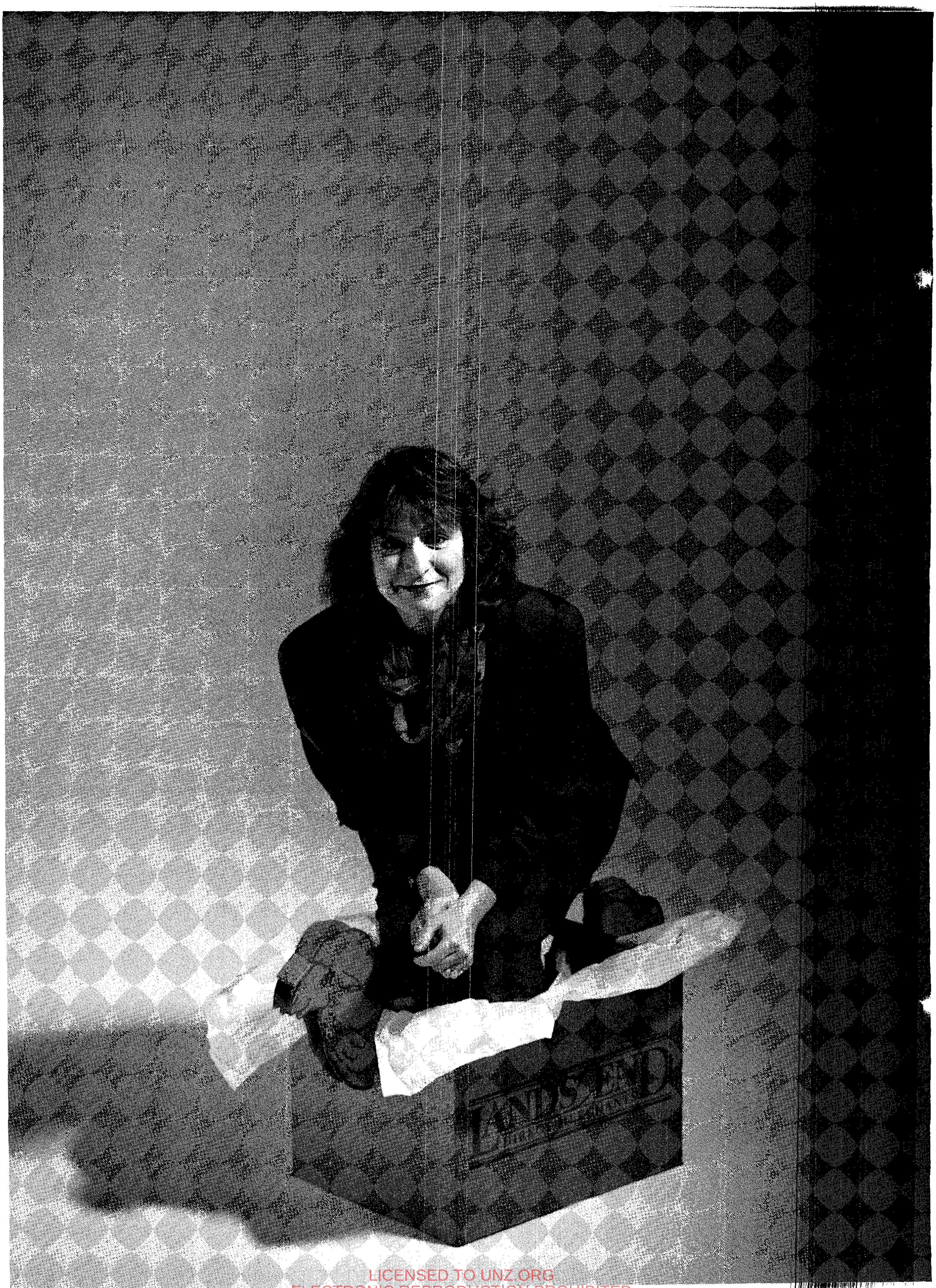

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Vietnam. Thus, for the first time, I came to a personal conclusion about Vietnam: we should start looking for a settlement, even if it did not meet our original objectives. I sent my observations to the President on May 17, 1965. I phrased my letter carefully, weighing every word:

> DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:
>
> I am returning herewith the letter of the Director of Central Intelligence, dated May 8, 1965, together with enclosures.
>
> I wish to make one major point.
>
> I believe our ground forces in South Vietnam should be kept to a minimum, consistent with the protection of our installations and property in that country. My concern is that a substantial buildup of U.S. ground troops would be construed by the Communists, and by the world, as a determination on our part to win the war on the ground.
>
> This could be a quagmire. It could turn into an open-ended commitment on our part that would take more and more ground troops, without a realistic hope of ultimate victory.
>
> I do not think the situation is comparable to Korea. The political posture of the parties involved, and the physical conditions, including terrain, are entirely different.
>
> I continue to believe that the constant probing of every avenue leading to a possible settlement will ultimately be fruitful. It won't be what we want, but we can learn to live with it.
>
> Respectfully yours,
> CLARK

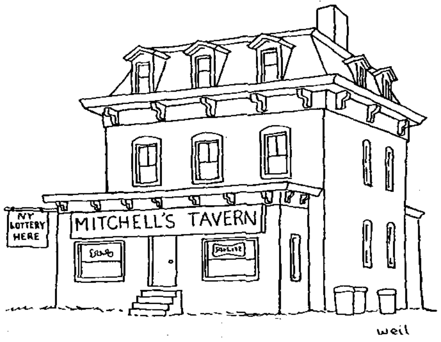
I did not get a reply from the President.

NINE weeks later, Bob McNamara returned from a visit to Vietnam with a recommendation for a huge increase in American ground troops. At 3 P.M. the next day, July 21st, President Johnson's personal secretary, Juanita Roberts, called me at my office, a block from the White House, and said that the President wanted me to come to the White House immediately, to join a meeting on Vietnam. It was particularly urgent, she said, because the meeting was already in progress. I walked rapidly across Lafayette Park and into the first of the most remarkable series of meetings that I had attended since a showdown with General George C. Marshall over Israel in 1948. But in 1948, as an assistant to the President, I knew exactly what my role was. This time, I had only a small sense of what was going on and, at first, no idea of what role I should play.

As I entered the Cabinet Room, President Johnson waved me to an empty seat at the table. The President was flanked by Secretary of State Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara. Next to McNamara sat the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle Wheeler. Around the room were other senior members of the Administration: the national-security assistant, McGeorge Bundy; Under-Secretary of State Ball; Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs William P. Bundy; C.I.A. Director Raborn and Deputy C.I.A. Director Helms; former Ambassador to South Vietnam Henry Cabot Lodge; United States Information Agency Director Carl Rowan; Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance; and two White House aides, Bill Moyers, the press secretary, and Jack Valenti, the special assistant.

Nearly all these men had been profoundly influenced by lessons derived from the Cuban missile crisis—especially the value of "flexible response" and "controlled escalation." Their success in handling a nuclear showdown with Moscow had created among this group of men a feeling that no nation as small and backward as North Vietnam could stand up to the power of the United States. They were not arrogant in the sense that Senator J. William Fulbright and others later accused them of being, but they held a misplaced belief that, no matter what the circumstances, American power could not be successfully challenged anywhere in the world.

Still, everyone in the room seemed keenly aware that we were facing—belatedly, in my opinion—a momentous decision. Westmoreland had requested nineteen additional American combat battalions—a hundred thousand more men by the end of the year, plus more in 1966—plus an intensification of the bombing of the North and a partial mobilization of the National Guard and the Reserves. McNamara, who had once been an advocate of bombing the North in order, in part, to avoid deploying ground troops, supported this request. Taylor had also changed his position, and now supported Westmoreland, on the ground that it was too late for the nation to turn back.



George Ball was talking. For over a month, he had been arguing, unsupported by anyone else in the Administration, against the McNamara-Wheeler-Westmoreland proposals. "We can't win," he said, his deep voice dominating the Cabinet Room. "The war will be long and protracted, with heavy casualties. The most we can hope for is a messy conclusion. We must measure this long-term price against the short-term loss that will result from a withdrawal." Producing a chart that correlated public opinion with American casualties in Korea, Ball predicted that the American public would not support a long and inconclusive war. World opinion would also turn against us. Ball said he knew that withdrawal was difficult for a President. "But almost every great captain in history at some time in his career has had to make a tactical withdrawal when conditions were unfavorable," he said.

Looking straight at Ball, the President said, not harshly but with profound concern, bordering, I thought, on anguish, "Wouldn't all these countries—Korea, Thailand, Western Europe—say Uncle Sam is a paper tiger? Would we lose credibility by breaking the word of three Presidents if we give up as you propose? It would seem to me to be an irreparable blow, but I gather that you don't think so. . . ."

"If we were actively helping a country with a stable, viable government, it would be a vastly different story," Ball replied.

One by one, the other senior members of the Administration lined up against Ball. McGeorge Bundy argued, in his usual crisp style, that Ball's views constituted "a radical switch in policy, without any evidence it should be done." Ball's arguments went "in the face of all that we have said and done." Bundy added, "It will not be quick. No single action will bring victory, but I think it is essential to make clear that we are not going to be thrown out."

Ball replied, "My problem is not that we will get thrown out but that we will get bogged down and won't be able to win."

Since I entered the room, Dean Rusk had been silent. I was curious to see where he would come out. Now he

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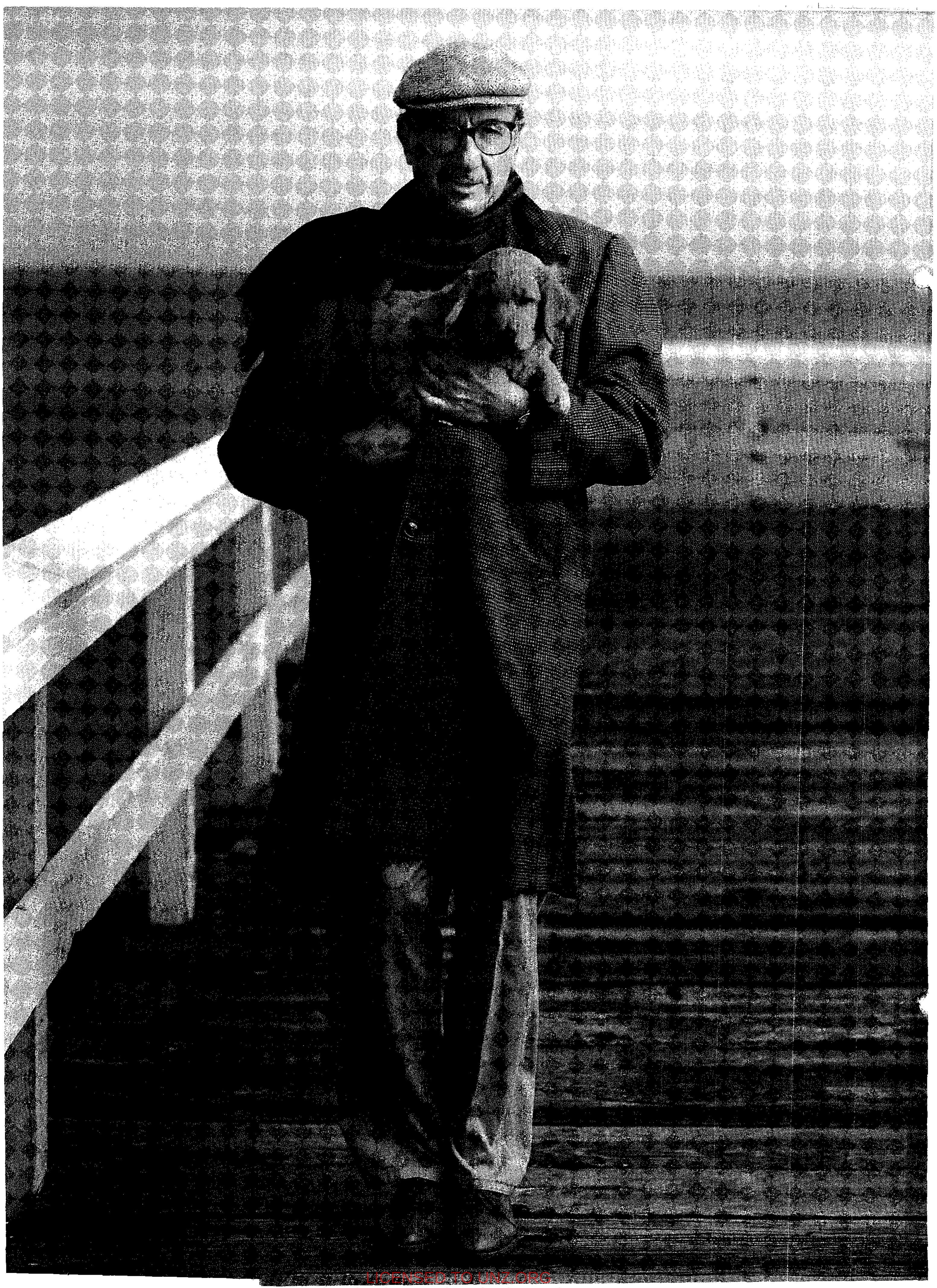

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spoke, in the calm, lucid, methodical manner that gave his words such authority: "If the Communist world finds that we will not pursue our commitments to the end, I don't know where they will stay their hand. I am more optimistic about the situation in Vietnam than some of my colleagues. . . . We should not worry about massive American casualties when the military says, at the same time, that we cannot find the enemy. I don't see great American casualties unless the Chinese come in. Vietnam is a testing of us by the Russians and the Chinese. Certainly we have had setbacks in Vietnam, just as we had setbacks in Korea. We may have more. But Vietnam must be an example for the entire free world."

Henry Cabot Lodge joined the discussion. A tall, slender, and attractive man of sixty-three with curious upper-class Boston intonation and manners, Lodge was not noted for his intellect, but I felt sure that his position would carry extra weight with President Johnson, for two good reasons: first, he was a prominent Republican (who had, in fact, run against Johnson for the Vice-Presidency in 1960); and, second, at an age when most men had retired, he had just agreed to return to the most difficult assignment in the American diplomatic service, the Ambassadorship in Vietnam. "There is a greater threat of World War III if we don't go in than if we do go in," he said. "I cannot be as pessimistic as George Ball about the situation in Vietnam."

McNamara spoke again, with his usual precision and air of certainty: "Our national honor is at stake. Our withdrawal would start further probing by the Communists. We would lose all of Southeast Asia. I feel that the risks of following my program have been vastly overstated by George Ball."

Shortly after 5 P.M., the meeting adjourned. I had taken careful notes but had said nothing. I returned to my office troubled by the magnitude of the McNamara request.

We resumed the discussion in the Cabinet Room at noon the next day, with the Joint Chiefs of Staff presenting their formal position on the need for the buildup. Although this meeting had a slightly ritualistic air, it was an essential part of the process. The President could not address an issue of such importance without giving the Chiefs a chance to present their views. In addition to the President, the Joint Chiefs, and the three service secretaries—Stanley Resor for the Army, Paul Nitze for the Navy, and Eugene M. Zuckert for the Air Force—McNamara, Vance, McGeorge Bundy, and I were present. No other White House staff members and no State Department officials were invited. The President opened the meeting by listing three options for the nation. We could leave—choose an "elegant bugout," as he put it. We could maintain our current force levels and lose slowly. Or we could add a hundred thousand men to our force levels in Vietnam, recognizing that this addition might not be enough to achieve our objectives and we might have to add more next year.

Then the Joint Chiefs gave their views. I was struck by the fact that although they all favored escalation, none offered assurances of success. Admiral David McDonald, the Chief of Naval Operations, said, "More troops are needed to turn the tide. Otherwise, we'll lose slowly."

The President looked at him for a few moments, then said, "But you don't know if a hundred thousand more men will be enough. What makes you conclude that, if you don't know where we are going, and what will happen, we shouldn't pause to find out?"

McDonald replied, "I believe that sooner or later we'll force the enemy to the conference table. We can't win an all-out war."

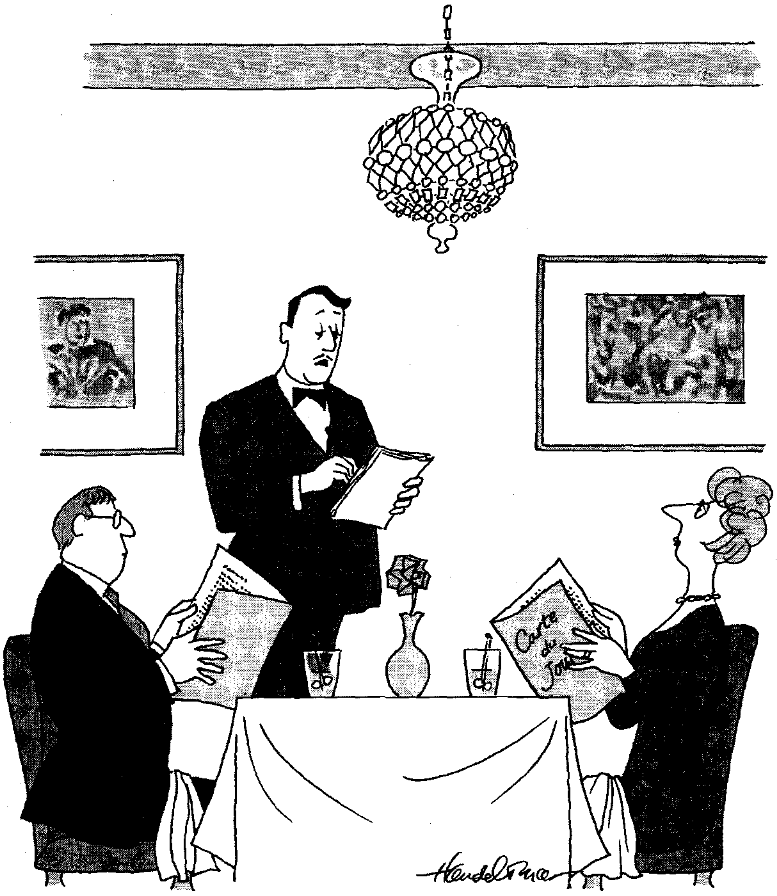
President Johnson: "Is this a chance we want to take?"

Admiral McDonald: "Yes, in my opinion, when we view the alternatives—get out now or pour in more men."

And so it went. Repeatedly, the President asked the military the same questions. The answers varied only a little. Secretary Nitze said that putting in more men would give us about a "sixty-forty chance to turn the tide." He suggested providing Westmoreland with more troops than he had asked for, in order to increase the chances of success. McNamara added that the current plan called for the introduction of a hundred thousand troops by the end of the year, and an additional hundred thousand in 1966. He estimated the cost of the buildup at twelve billion dollars in 1966—a low estimate, as it turned out.

President Johnson showed pain at the choices he faced. Turning toward McNamara, he said, "Westmoreland's request means that we are in a new war. This is going off the diving board."

McNamara agreed,



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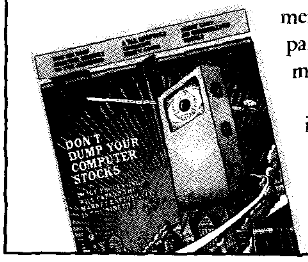

The applications for computer imaging systems are so dazzling that one day nearly every office worker could be connected to or near one. What all this means to a sluggish computer industry is growth. The kind of growth that will propel it into the year 2000, and beyond. The Forbes article contradicts Wall Street's conclusion that computers are just another cyclical capital goods industry.

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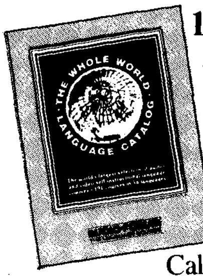

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and responded to the President's misgivings with the most extreme version of the domino theory that I had ever heard: "Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia are all at immediate risk. For two or three years, Communist domination would stop there, but the ripple effect would be great—in Japan, and India. We would have to give up some of our bases. Ayub"—of Pakistan—"would move closer to China. Greece and Turkey would move to neutralist positions. Communist agitation would increase in Africa."

Someone mentioned a recent Gallup poll that showed substantial public support for taking a hard line with Hanoi. But the President understood that the polls meant little so early in the war. "If you make a commitment to jump off a building, and you find out how high it is, you may withdraw the commitment," he said.

I had remained silent; as the sole private citizen in the room, present only as a personal friend and adviser to the President, I felt that I should express my opinions privately to the President before discussing them with anyone else. But near the end of the meeting, without commenting directly on McNamara's proposals, I asked General Wheeler a simple question: "If the military plan that you propose is carried out, what is its ultimate result if it is 'successful'?"

Wheeler answered that in all likelihood we would be able to withdraw most of our forces, but that there was a chance that we would have to stay for a long time with a smaller number of troops to help secure a stable government. Shortly after that exchange, the meeting adjourned.

We resumed the meeting after lunch, with the addition of Dean Rusk and George Ball. The President made an emotional statement, which I thought reflected his growing frustration with the State Department's failure to produce a peace plan. "This war is like a prizefight," he said. "Our right hand is our military power, but our left must be peace proposals. Every time you move troops forward, you should move diplomats forward, too. I want this done. The generals want more and more from me. They want to go farther and farther. But State has to supply me with something, too."

The meetings had depressed me. The pressure on the President for escalation was overwhelming. As we left the room, around four-twenty, George Ball whispered that he wanted to speak with me privately. We walked down the hall a few yards to the Roosevelt Room. Once we were alone, Ball asked me if he was correct in assuming that I had strong doubts about the war and McNamara's proposals. I told him that not only did I have such doubts but I had already sent the President a letter stating my concerns.

"Then you and I are in total agreement," he said, suddenly enthusiastic. "I have been looking for support for a long time. I think your influence with the President is tremendously important. I want to put into your hands a series of memoranda which I have sent to the President. Can you handle them? They are highly classified."

I reminded Ball that, as a member of the P.F.I.A.B., I had the necessary clearances, and added that I had a safe at my house. "Have the memos hand-delivered to me, and I will see that they are properly cared for," I said.

As I started to leave the White House, a guard said that the President was looking for me. I went to the small anteroom adjoining the Oval Office, and found Johnson and McGeorge Bundy waiting for me. The President wanted to know my reactions to what I had heard over the past two days. I replied that I needed more time to reflect on what I had heard but that I had some preliminary reactions. "The way the military acted today reminded me of the way they dealt with President Truman during the Korean War," I said. "Some of what General Wheeler said today was ridiculous." I quoted from my notes: " 'The more men we have, the greater the likelihood of smaller losses.' And if they infiltrate more men into the south, it will mean larger groups; and this will allow us to 'cream them.' " Then I said, "These are disturbing statements. I don't believe they are being straight with us. I am bearish about this whole exercise. I know what pressure you're under from McNamara and the military. But if you handle it carefully you don't have to commit yourself and the nation. If you overplay the decisions now under consideration, the nation will be committed to win a ground war in Asia. I asked myself two questions today as I listened to McNamara and the Chiefs. First, can a military victory be won? And, second, what do we have if we do win? On the basis of what we have heard, I do not know the answer to either question."

The President listened in silence. Bundy jotted down a few notes. When I finished, Johnson said he wanted to talk to me again in the next few days, when I had had time to reflect more on the meetings that I had attended.

Shortly after I returned to my office, an aide from Ball's office arrived with a thick bundle of documents—memorandums that Ball had been writing since October of the previous year, arguing against each stage of the escalation. I took them home, and stayed up until almost two in the morning reading them and taking careful notes. They were everything that I would have expected from Ball—forceful, fearless, and, to my mind, convincing. They amplified and gave historical context to the presentations I had heard him make to the President. I suspected as I read them that George had been fighting his lonely battle so long that, to a certain extent, the President was no longer paying Ball's views the close attention they deserved, and I thought that perhaps I had been brought into the discussions by the President in part because he wanted a new voice to argue against McNamara, Rusk, and the Chiefs.

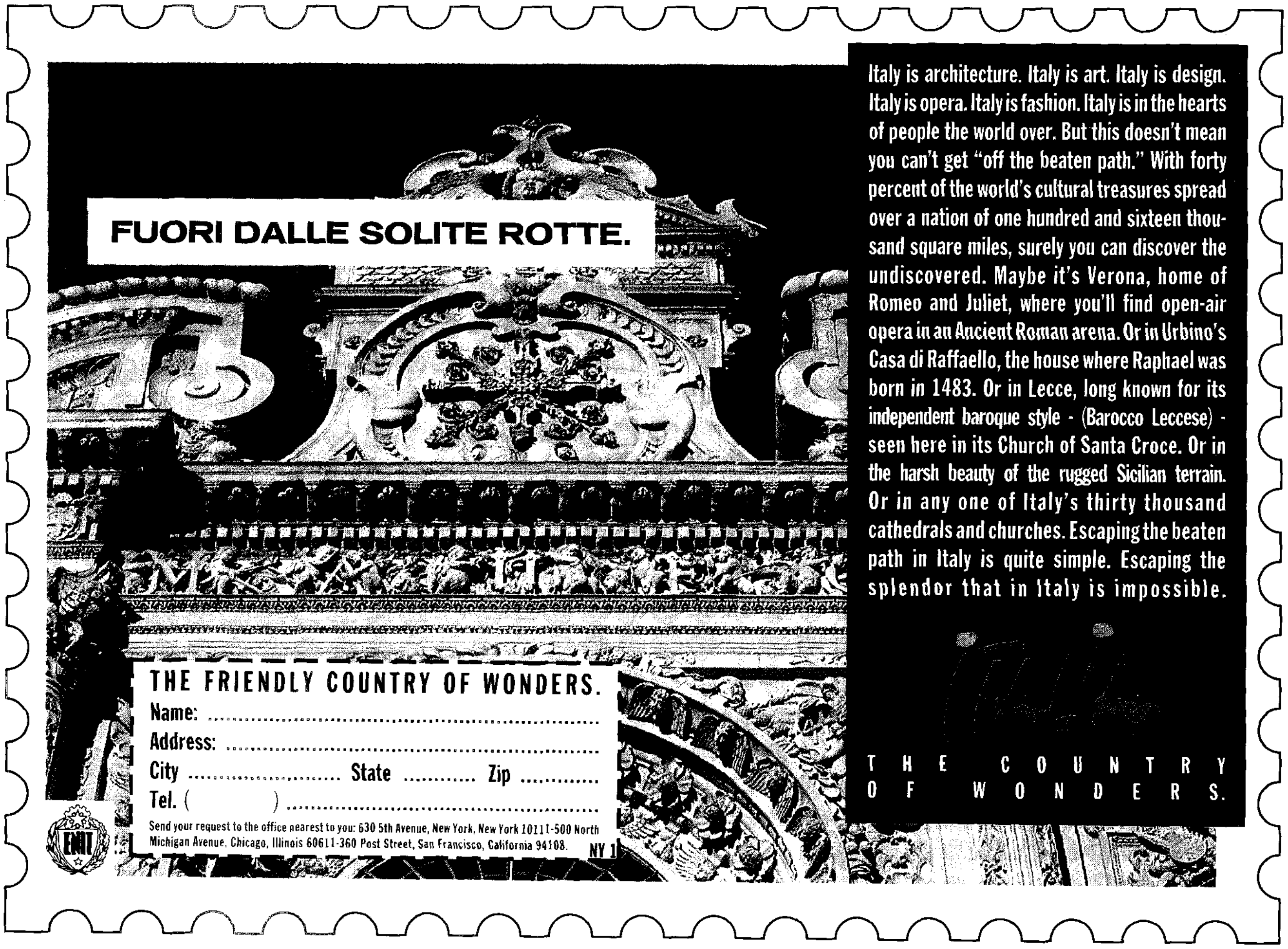
On Friday, July 23rd, I called Ball and told him that the documents he had sent me were impressive and persuasive. He was, he said, "elated" to have me as an ally. He was going with Rusk to the White House for another meeting and would call me as soon as he got back. Ball called that evening, after he returned from the meeting. It had involved a much smaller group—Rusk, McNamara, Wheeler, Moyers, and McGeorge Bundy. Ball was convinced that my talk with Johnson the previous evening had had a "salutary effect."

I was less hopeful. I told him that I had just finished talking on the telephone to "another source," and that on the basis of that conversation it appeared that President Johnson had virtually made up his mind to support McNamara and Westmoreland. My informant had been another participant in the meeting—Bill Moyers. He sympathized with Ball and me but felt he could not play an open role in policymaking, because the job of press secretary constrained him from active policy formulation. Moyers told me that it would take a miraculous effort to change the President's course, for a change would be required not only in Johnson's mind but also in Rusk's, McNamara's, and McGeorge Bundy's.

Ball told me that he understood the difficulties but felt that I was the only person who had even the slightest chance to stem the rush toward disaster.

I promised to have "a very hard and long talk" with the President, but I cautioned him against false hope. "Individuals sometimes become so bound up in a certain course that it is difficult to know where objectivity stops and personal involvement begins," I said.

According to Ball, the President was not much concerned about the opposition from students and the left, and my presentation would have to deal primarily with his fear of a right-wing backlash. Ball repeated a comment that President Johnson had made to him:



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"George, don't pay any attention to what those little shits on the campuses do. The great beast is the reactionary elements in this country. Those are the people we have to fear."

Just before 7 P.M., the President called to invite my wife, Marny, and me to come to Camp David on Saturday. Bob and Margaret McNamara would be there, he said, along with a few other people. We would relax, and we would have a chance to talk privately about Vietnam. The stage was now set for the final argument. I knew that Moyers was right: it would be very difficult, perhaps impossible, to stop the rush toward escalation. Could the President reject the advice of his three top national-security advisers—all inherited from Kennedy—and also the unanimous advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Ambassador to Vietnam, himself a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff? Could he change a policy that had the support of a substantial majority of the American public? Would he risk going down in history as the first American President to lose a foreign war? The answer seemed all too clear.

On the other hand, Lyndon Johnson had just won an overwhelming victory in a campaign built upon the theme of his restraint versus Senator Goldwater's extremism. It was the maximum distance to the next election, and if the economy did not deteriorate there would be ample time to repair any political damage inflicted by the right. What effect a withdrawal from Vietnam would have on our position in the rest of Asia would be difficult to predict, but I believed that the effect could be contained and minimized. And the support of the American public was clearly based on a belief that the conflict would be of short duration; we all agreed that if the war dragged on there would be erosion.

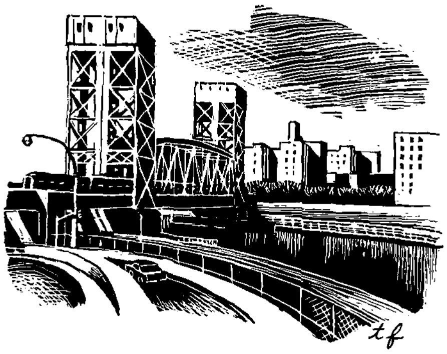
In thinking about the meeting that was to take place at Camp David, I gave particular attention to Bob McNamara, who had been playing a dominant role in the government during an extraordinarily difficult period and was now leading the support for a policy that he would have opposed six months earlier. Although Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, Taylor, Lodge, and the Chiefs were all important, McNamara held the key to the President's decision: his formidable intelligence and reputation were the critical variables in the process driving the President toward approval of Westmoreland's request. In this case, it seemed that Bob's attention to facts and his analyses had led him into a logical fallacy, but his reputation for personal integrity and the force of his personality were carrying the case against those voices calling for a different course.

I had liked and respected Bob McNamara from the moment we first met, in 1961, and it pained me that we would now be cast as advocates of opposing points of view. As I have in almost every such disagreement in my life, I determined to do my best to keep the argument totally impersonal. Bob had his views, I had mine. I thought he was wrong, but I did not question his motives or his professionalism. We would present our views to the President and let him decide.

Marny and I flew to Camp David Saturday afternoon, sharing a helicopter with Bob and Margie McNamara and their son, Craig, and the Johnsons' daughter Luci and her husband, Pat Nugent. On the beautiful twenty-five-minute flight from Washington to Camp David, we chatted in a most friendly fashion. Vietnam was not mentioned, and an observer would never have guessed that a major confrontation was about to take place between two of the passengers.

All of us spent the afternoon relaxing in the glorious surroundings of Camp David. Each guest or couple was assigned a separate cabin. The accommodations, contrary to the public perception, were not opulent, but they were extremely relaxing. Because the cottages were relatively far apart, the guests could keep to themselves much of the time, play golf or tennis, or walk around the Presidential retreat.

Arthur Goldberg, who was to step down as a Supreme Court Justice and be sworn in as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations the following day, was another guest, as were Senator Birch Bayh, of Indiana, and his wife, Marvella. Two important presidential assistants—Jack Valenti and Horace Busby—joined us, and we all ate dinner with the Johnsons. Despite the informal and friendly atmosphere, the President was unusually subdued.



On Sunday morning, I went over my notes one last time. From Ball's memorandums and my own thoughts, I had assembled the strongest case that I could against McNamara's proposals, structuring it as though I would be arguing in a courtroom, with McNamara as the opposing attorney and the President as the judge. My case boiled down to a few fundamentals. I knew that the President had heard them before, but I hoped that if they were properly assembled they would shake McNamara's certitude, impose their own logic on the President, and lead him to a new conclusion.

At 5 P.M., President Johnson asked me to join him and McNamara at Aspen Lodge. From the large, glassed-in living-dining-room area, which afforded us a panoramic view, I could see through the large windows on the right the putting green that President Eisenhower had had installed, and, straight ahead, the lovely green hills called the Catoctin Mountains.

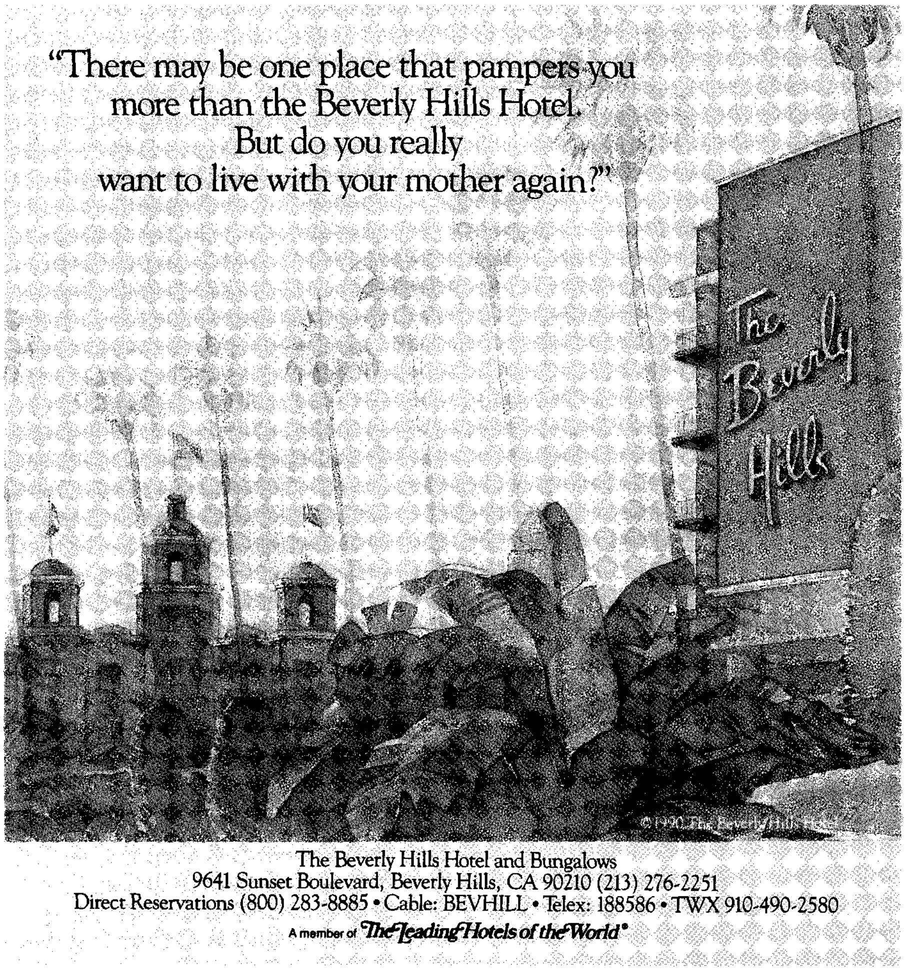
Aspen Lodge was decorated as a hunting lodge, with unassuming furnishings surrounding a large fireplace on one side of the main room. On the other side of the room was a rectangular dining table, around which President Johnson often held conferences and late-night meetings, and it was here that we sat to discuss Vietnam. The President sat at the head of the table. I sat on his right, directly across from McNamara. To McNamara's left sat Arthur Goldberg, and to my right sat Busby and Jack Valenti, who took notes. As we talked, two Filipino stewards served soft drinks.

The President began, primarily because of Goldberg's presence, by mentioning a proposal to take the Vietnam issue to the United Nations. He asked for my view. I quickly dismissed the idea. I felt that the risks far outweighed any potential gains at the U.N. Then I moved into the broader discussion for which I had prepared myself. "We must not create an impression that we have decided to replace the South Vietnamese and win a ground war in Vietnam," I said. "If the decisions about to be made are interpreted as the beginning of a permanent and long-range policy, it will severely limit the flexibility which the President must have. What happened in Vietnam is no one person's fault. The bombing might have worked, but it hasn't. A commitment like the one that we have made in Vietnam can change as conditions change. A failure to engage in an all-out war will not lower our international prestige. This is not the last inning in the struggle against Communism. We must pick those spots where the stakes are highest for us and we have the greatest ability to prevail."

McNamara listened without showing the slightest emotion, but I put more passion into what I was saying than I had into any other presentation I had ever made to a President: "I hate this war. I do not believe we can win. If we send in a hundred thousand more men, the North Vietnamese will match us. If the North Vietnamese run out of men, the Chinese will send in 'volunteers.' Russia and China don't intend for us to win the war. If we 'won,' we would face a long occupation with constant trouble. And if we don't win after a big buildup it will be a huge catastrophe. We could lose more than fifty thousand men in Vietnam. It will ruin us. Five years, fifty thousand men killed, hundreds of billions of dollars—it is just not for us."

I paused for a moment, then went on, "For the time being, Mr. President, let us hold to our present course, without dramatic escalation. You will probably need to send some additional men now for this strategy, but not many. At the end of the year, after the monsoon season, let us probe, let us quietly search with other countries for an honorable way out. Let us moderate our position in order to do so, and lower our sights—lower the sights of the American people—right away. Let the best minds in your Administration look for a way out, not ways to win this unwinnable war. I can't see anything but catastrophe for my country."

After I finished, President Johnson turned to McNamara, who replied forcefully that he did not agree with my premises or with my assessment of the chances for success in Vietnam. He repeated arguments he had made earlier in the week, and added nothing new. Without more American troops, he said, South Vietnam would fall, and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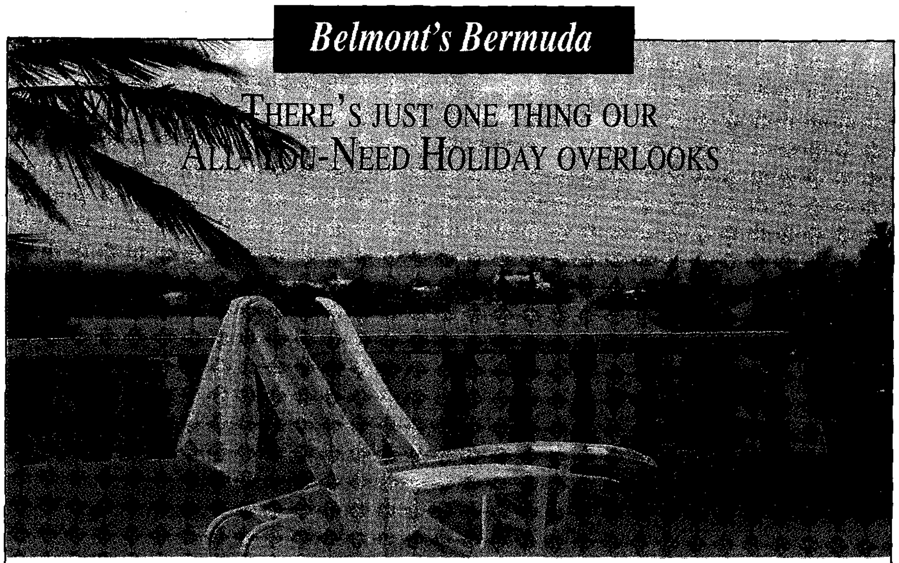

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that fall would hurt the United States throughout the entire world. The buildup was essential if we wanted to avoid a rapid defeat.

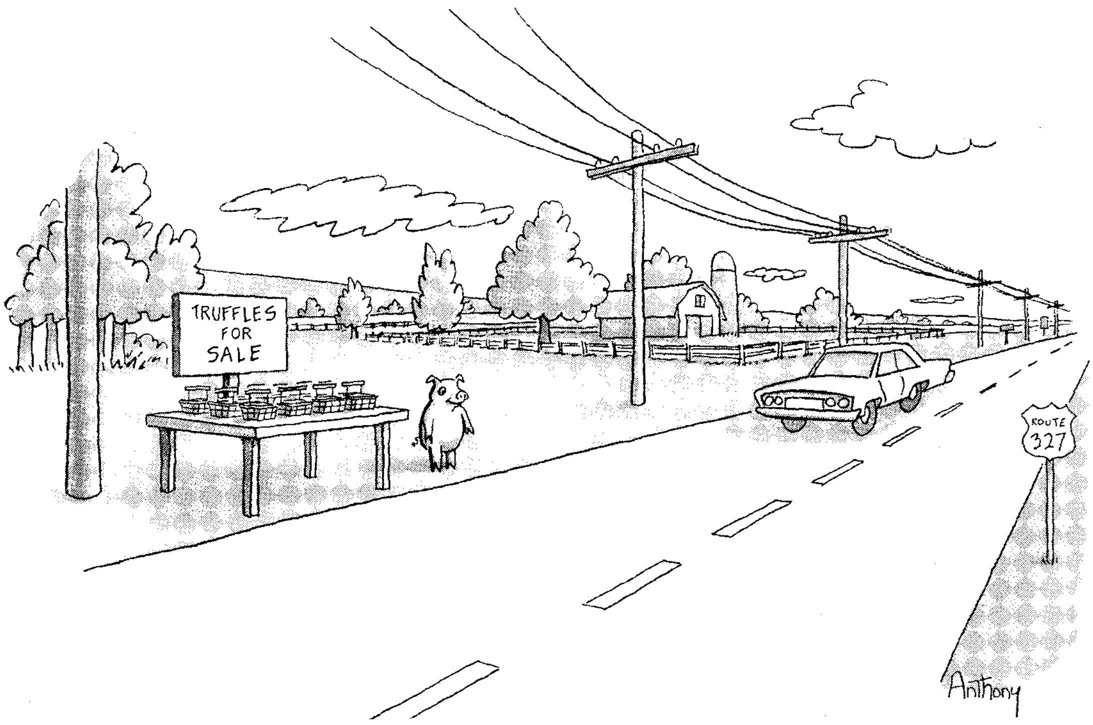
I was prepared to debate McNamara on every point, but, to my disappointment, the President wanted to end the discussion. Perhaps he sensed the futility of further debate. The lines were drawn clearly; he had heard the arguments on both sides, and there was little else to say. He told us that no one wanted peace more than he did, but he did not discuss the details of my position. It was time for him to make a decision.

When the meeting ended, we returned to our cottages. While we waited for dinner or for word that we were going home, the President did something quite unusual. First, he drove around the Camp David area alone for an hour. Then, also alone, he walked around the grounds, for another hour. It had been a lovely day, and the soft summer light lasted late into the evening as he walked. I assume that during his lonely drive and walk President Johnson reviewed all that he had heard in the previous week, and made up his mind. When he returned to Aspen Lodge, we ate another family meal, with some other friends he had invited to Camp David, but he did not refer to the debate between McNamara and me. We all returned to Washington a little before midnight, for a short night's sleep before the final meetings.

The next meeting started slightly after noon on Monday and continued, with a three-hour break in the afternoon, until seven. But the meeting had a different tone from those of the previous week; Johnson shifted the discussion to important but secondary matters—the exact number of men to be sent, the timing of the deployments, the public and congressional aspects of the announcement, and so on. The President asked me to repeat the presentation I had made at Camp David. After I finished speaking, George Ball slipped me a note, which I preserved with pride:

> CLARK—
> I'm glad to have such an eloquent and persuasive comrade bleeding on the same barricade.

But both George and I sensed that the battle was over. I felt that the President had asked me to repeat my arguments to the larger group only to show that he had listened to both sides



before granting the troop increase.

In the evening of July 26th, the same group—now in effect a war council considering tactics—returned to the White House to continue a discussion of whether or not to attack the surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) recently installed in North Vietnam. Given the fact that American pilots were risking their lives daily in raids over the North, I argued strongly that we should take the SAMs out with whatever means were available. It was the first, but not the last, time I argued for a tough position on a question of military tactics. Now that the President had committed us in Vietnam, I would generally support actions that I hoped would shorten the war or minimize American losses.

Ironically, the one minor success Ball and I had during the debate actually worked against our larger purpose. We had both argued that we should underplay any public announcements, so as to maintain maximum flexibility for future withdrawal, while arguing at the same time, of course, against any escalation at all. In the event, the President turned down our strategic objective but handled the public announcement in a manner consistent with our suggestion. Instead of delivering a nationally televised speech in prime time, he simply disclosed the buildup during a midday press conference on July 28th. Even though he had already secretly approved an increase of a hundred thousand men by year's end, with the possibility of another increase of a hundred thousand in 1966, he referred only to an increase of fifty thousand men, and told reporters that the additional troops did "not imply any change in policy whatsoever." Thus, in our last-ditch efforts to stop the escalation Ball and I had unintentionally encouraged a major Presidential deceit, which added significantly to the emerging credibility gap.

THE years of Vietnam were just beginning. I was constantly invited to the White House, often along with Abe Fortas, who was then a Washington lawyer and later became a Supreme Court Justice, for private discussions with the President. They covered every conceivable subject but were focussed more and more on the war. At the same time, I continued to decline the President's invitations to join the Administration. I knew that Lyndon Johnson paid more attention to those who maintained their independence. I preferred to remain outside the system, a private adviser, available whenever the President called.

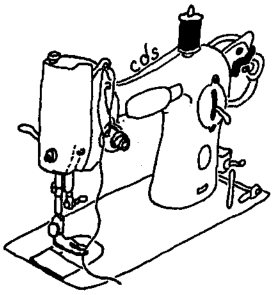
But what, I have been asked many times, is the role of an outside adviser? How should Presidents use them? My answer is simple: Every President, even if he ignores the advice, should get a "third opinion" from selected and seasoned private citizens he trusts. (The "second opinion" should come from congressional leaders.) Though Cabinet members and senior White House aides often resent outside advisers, a President takes too many risks when he relies for advice solely on his own staff and the federal bureaucracy. Each has its own personal or institutional priorities to protect. Outside advisers can serve the role of doubting Thomas when the bureaucracies are lined up behind a single position, or can help the President make a decision when there is a dispute within the government. They can give the President a different perspective on his own situation; they can be frank with the President when White House aides are not.

From 1961 until 1968, I resisted all suggestions that I join the Administration, initially that of President Kennedy and then those of President Johnson. However, the relationship I had with each man was quite different. When Kennedy called on me, it was usually to play a clearly defined role on a specific problem—from the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs to the steel crisis. Johnson, on the other hand, wanted my advice or observations on almost anything that confronted him. Kennedy rarely asked me for political advice; Johnson did so constantly. He also asked me to participate in important national-security meetings, which otherwise involved only government officials—something that Kennedy never did. In those meetings, I would say little unless the President asked me to comment, and would share my views with him later, in private.

My colleague in opposition in 1965, George Ball, had told the President and Secretary Rusk that he would not criticize the decision publicly. Nonetheless, his opposition to the July decision became known, and when his October, 1964, memorandum to the President was printed in its entirety, it created a sensation. By contrast, my own opposition to the buildup remained confidential, since I felt it inappropriate to relay anything said in personal conversations with the President to anyone else—even my old friend Senator Stuart Symington, who, after he became a leading opponent of the war, in late 1967, complained to his friends that he could no longer talk to me about Vietnam.

The period from the summer of 1965 to the end of 1967 was a critical time for the United States in Vietnam. Our troop strength there grew from seventy-five thousand to four hundred and eighty-five thousand. Casualties grew even faster, from about five hundred killed in action before July of 1965 to more than sixteen thousand by the end of 1967. Domestic controversy over the war effort also grew dramatically, with a handful of campus teach-ins giving way to large demonstrations in front of the Pentagon. Gradually, some newspapers and congressmen who had supported the war switched to anti-war policies. The increased casualties and the intensive television coverage of the war—making it the first "living-room war," in Michael Arlen's phrase—began to create pockets of opposition to the war throughout the country, even in areas far from the universities and big cities.

I continued to believe that we did not have a major national-security interest in Vietnam, but, having lost the argument over escalation, I felt it my duty to support any actions that appeared to offer a chance to bring an end—any end—to our involvement. Thus, within months I was widely viewed in Washington as a leading hawk. That the President often met alone with me and Abe Fortas, who was a deeply committed hard-liner on Vietnam, added to that perception.



Three main reasons led me to take this position, controversial then and criticized later.

First, I had never considered myself an expert on the situation in Vietnam. Many of those who had opposed Ball and me had greater experience and familiarity with the problem, and presented their views with certainty and conviction. Everyone else represented a department or an agency of the government, and had his own channels of information from the field. My opposition to the buildup had been based to a considerable extent on intuition. I had no firsthand knowledge and no sources of information from Southeast Asia to place against the confidence and detailed knowledge of the supporters of the war.

Second, I was influenced, starting in 1966, by a steady stream of optimistic briefings coming from the military, the White House, and even the C.I.A. Although the C.I.A. later claimed that its reports were more cautious than those of the military, nothing in its analyses suggested that the basic American objective was unattainable; they pointed out only that the war might take longer than the military forecast. The military briefings, and the picture painted with relentless optimism by Walt Rostow, who had replaced McGeorge Bundy as President Johnson's national-security assistant, maintained that we were headed for success if we persevered. General Westmoreland predicted that Communist casualties would soon exceed Hanoi's replacement capability (the "crossover point," he called it), and then the Communists would either negotiate or withdraw ("fade away" is how Ambassador Lodge liked to put it in his telegrams). I read messages from the Embassy in Saigon that described in glowing terms the steady strengthening of the South Vietnamese government. Those assessments supported a belief that we could find our way out of Vietnam if we followed the policies advocated by General Westmoreland and the Joint Chiefs, Bob McNamara, Maxwell Taylor, Henry Cabot Lodge, Dean Rusk, Walt Rostow, and Ellsworth Bunker, who succeeded Lodge as Ambassador in 1967. Later, when I began to take a firsthand look at the situation, I discovered that much of the information from the Embassy and the military command in Saigon was either inaccurate or irrelevant. But while I should have acted earlier on the warning signs, I had no idea how inaccurate those official reports were until I made a trip to Southeast Asia in the late summer of 1967. Until then, I had been so anxious to find a way out of Vietnam that I accepted them as accurate, and I had supported the military requests for more troops as the best way to end the war quickly.

A final reason for my position from 1965 to 1967 was a consequence of my relationship with President Johnson. Once the President had set the basic course, I felt that what he needed was support, not more criticism. I had opposed the buildup in 1965, and lost. But thenceforth I looked for ways to make it succeed, instead of continuing to argue an issue that had been decided. I felt that my responsibility was to help the President achieve the objective he had laid out.

In mid-September of 1965, at the end of a relaxing Sunday-afternoon cruise on the Potomac, the President asked me to return to the White House with him, and there he talked to me about Vietnam until almost midnight. He was increasingly worried that the buildup and the bombing were not having the effect on the enemy which the military had predicted. When I observed that the P.F.I.A.B. was concerned about the poor performance of the intelligence agencies in the war zone, the President said, "Why don't you go out there and get a firsthand look at the situation?" I was delighted with the suggestion, never imagining at the time that the trip itself would be overshadowed by its aftermath—the angriest exchange I ever had with Lyndon Johnson, which was caused by an incident involving a Harvard professor named Henry Kissinger.

After briefings in Washington, I left, with Patrick Coyne, on the morning of October 21, 1965, for Tokyo, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Saigon. My discussions with intelligence officials in the course of that trip were highly classified, and remain so to this day, because they dealt with the intelligence community's most tightly guarded secrets, sources, and methods. Much attention was focussed on a matter then considered one of the highest priorities: there was great concern in Washington that Chinese "volunteers" might enter the war, as they had in Korea, and intelligence methods designed to warn us of this possibility played a large part in my discussions.

I arrived in Saigon late on October 26th and went directly to the residence of Ambassador Lodge, a lovely old French-colonial villa on the edge of town. The city, with its tree-lined streets and broad boulevards, still retained vestiges of its days as a French-colonial capital. Yet it showed signs of the growing American presence as well —heavy military traffic, hastily constructed headquarters and barracks, and numerous young American soldiers in the streets and the bars.

Lodge was an exuberant and amusing man, to whom a surface optimism was second nature. His willingness to return to this most difficult of all foreign postings for a second tour had won him great gratitude in Washington. Even after his first tour, he knew very little about Vietnam, and at the age of sixty-three he was unlikely to learn much more; he was therefore dependent on his own instincts and his staff. But at that time, when the war appeared to most observers to be going well, his limitations seemed unimportant compared with the value of having him in Saigon. For security reasons, his wife had left Saigon with the rest of the American dependents in February, when the bombing of North Vietnam had begun, and the Ambassador enjoyed having company. He also had another house guest at the time I was there—Henry Kissinger, whom I had not previously met, and who was there as a consultant to Lodge. He and I had different missions and schedules, and never had time to exchange views.

The intelligence effort in Vietnam was confused, as Maxwell Taylor had warned me it would be. Pat Coyne and I drew up a list of "action items" designed to improve the intelligence effort there—one of many such lists made in the Vietnam years. Upon my return, I submitted our list to the President. He approved its recommendations and sent them back to the field, but they had little effect.

In private, Lodge, Westmoreland, and other senior American officials expressed a combination of concern and optimism over the political situation in Saigon. Nguyen Van Thieu and Nguyen Cao Ky were now running the government in uneasy alliance, with Thieu as Chief of State and Ky as Prime Minister, but the political turmoil in Saigon was still diverting attention from the all-important task of building the government's presence in the countryside. The political problems were admittedly serious, but they dismayed neither Lodge nor Westmoreland. While Lodge thought that the task of "nation-building" would be long and slow, he was utterly convinced that we were on the road to success. Even more important, Westmoreland gave a very upbeat presentation during a private meeting with me

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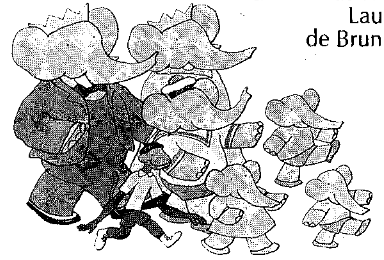

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and also at a formal briefing. We were prevailing, he said, and the Communists were weakening—their casualties mounting at a rate so high that soon they would no longer be able to replace their losses. Westmoreland said he needed greater authority to make decisions "in theatre," without recourse to Washington or to his superior in Hawaii, the Commander-in-Chief for the Pacific, or CINCPAC. One of Westmoreland's strongest complaints was about Washington's incessant second-guessing of his selection of bombing targets for B-52s, even within South Vietnam. I sympathized with him on this matter; one cannot attempt to run a war at the tactical level from ten thousand miles away, through a lengthy and cumbersome chain of command. When I returned to Washington, I took up Westmoreland's case with McNamara, and the interference in selecting B-52 bombing targets was substantially reduced, to Westmoreland's relief. I was less successful in freeing Westmoreland from the requirement to report to Washington through CINCPAC. Opposition from the Navy (by tradition, CINCPAC was an admiral) prevented such a reorganization, even though it made sense. (By contrast, the military chain of command in the recent Gulf War, with General Norman Schwarzkopf reporting directly to Washington, was considerably more effective.)

I made one field trip in Vietnam, travelling by helicopter to Army bases at Bien-hoa and Vung Tau. Bien-hoa, which was just north of Saigon and had once been a small provincial town, was now a mammoth United States Army headquarters. I remembered my days at the Western Sea Frontier Command, in 1944, when the Army and the Navy fought each other for limited supplies, and I marvelled at what, by comparison, seemed real luxury. It was only weeks before Thanksgiving, and I was told proudly that every American in the country, even if he was manning one of the most isolated and dangerous outposts, would get Thanksgiving dinner, complete with yams and cranberries, thanks to the ubiquitous helicopter.

Vung Tau, once a peaceful and popular French seaside resort, had become an important Army logistics base east of Saigon. It was also the site of a training center for rural-pacification workers (the "cadre," in the jargon of Vietnam), which had been set up by the C.I.A. This idea seemed particularly promising to me then: instead of relying on American firepower forever, field workers trained in political organization would counter the Vietcong at the village level, where the war would ultimately be won or lost. Later, the idea, while well conceived, went the way of so many other American efforts in Vietnam: a victim of bureaucratic infighting and poor and corrupt management, it failed to live up to its early promise. But at the time of my visit my American hosts were confident that the cadre program would cut deeply into Vietcong strength. I was impressed by the energy of the Americans at both Bien-hoa and Vung Tau; they represented, I thought, the best that America could send abroad. But in my enthusiasm for the dedication of the young Americans briefing me I did not see at first that the Vietnamese were playing a declining role in their own war, and was unaware of the danger that this situation posed for both countries.

I RETURNED to Washington late in the evening on October 31st, exhausted from what seemed an almost endless trip from Hong Kong—with stops in Tokyo and Seattle—to Baltimore's Friendship Airport. (I did not find out for some weeks that my fatigue was due to something more than jet lag; I had contracted hepatitis, and when it erupted, in late November, I had to be hospitalized for several weeks.) Two days after I reached Washington, I picked up the Washington *Post* and read a front-page article by Jack Foisie. It began:

> SAIGON—Recent emissaries from the White House are reporting that there is an almost total lack of political maturity or unselfish political motivation among the current leaders of the South Vietnam government.
>
> Although they themselves are not talking, these are known to be the findings of Prof. Henry Kissinger, the noted political scientist, and Clark Clifford, the Washington lawyer and advisor to Presidents—both of whom have been recent visitors in Saigon. Clifford and Kissinger were sent here by President Johnson to make independent appraisals of the direction American political policy should take in South Vietnam.

My name did not appear again in Foisie's long article, which described in detail Kissinger's purported views of Saigon's political immaturity and said that the White House was awaiting his report. I was stunned. I had not met with the press at any point during my trip to Asia, nor had I discussed my views of the political situation in Saigon with anyone outside a small circle of officials in Saigon, where my contacts had been with Ambassador Lodge, General Westmoreland, the political counsellor Philip C. Habib, and the C.I.A. station chief. I was even more astonished when a very concerned Bill Moyers called from the White House to tell me that the President was "off the wall" about Foisie's article. He made it clear that it would take some doing to calm the President down. And did I know, he added, that Jack Foisie was Dean Rusk's brother-in-law?

I told Moyers that Foisie's story was a complete mystery to me. I not only did not know of his connection to Rusk but had never met him and, furthermore, I did not see what difference it made whose brother-in-law he was. I liked and respected Bill Moyers. He owed his entire career to Lyndon Johnson, having worked for him since the age of twenty-five. Yet Moyers never lost himself completely in Johnson's strange and overpowering world, the way so many others did. One of Moyers' skills was his ability to transmit the President's mood accurately while subtly detaching himself from what he was conveying. Some of his colleagues in the Johnson White House may have thought he was not always completely loyal to his chief, but I felt he served the President better by retaining a degree of independence of thought.

Moyers suggested that while he tried to calm the press down I write a letter to the President explaining my position. When Moyers, in his press conference two days later, was asked about the views ascribed to Kissinger and me, he deliberately separated Kissinger from me:

> Those views are not Mr. Clifford's views. Whatever Professor Kissinger's views are, his views are not those of the government's. . . . I don't know what he [Kissinger] was doing over there. The President didn't know about it.

What the White House said about my trip had one minor unfortunate aspect. Moyers was instructed to say that my trip to Asia had *not* been made at the President's request. Since there were higher matters at stake than this unnecessary but small misstatement of fact, I accepted it as part of the price of working with President Johnson.

My letter, drafted in close consultation with Moyers, went to the President on November 4th and was released by the White House two days later. It contained a flat denial of Foisie's article "insofar as the references to me are concerned." I had still not talked to the President. Moyers told me that, despite my letter, the President remained upset. Although President Johnson himself was a major source of information to the press (it is said that "the ship of state is the only vessel that leaks from the top"), he had a nearly pathological hatred of leaks by other people.

On November 11th, I flew to the L.B.J. Ranch, where the President was recuperating from gallbladder surgery that had been performed a month earlier. Even before I could inquire as to his health, President Johnson began to berate me for my supposed connection with Foisie's article. Ignoring the fact that Moyers had, in his name, absolved me of any such connection, Johnson asked me, in the most caustic terms, why I would go and say such stupid things to a reporter. And to Dean Rusk's brother-in-law as well—a relationship that in Johnson's eyes gave the story added credibility.

I was as angry as the President, and told him again that the story was wrong.

"Well, I read it in the paper," the President said.

That was the last straw. "You are a great one to talk about reading something in the newspapers," I said, with anger. "You constantly state that the papers never report accurately what you say, that they put words in your mouth. Now you are doing the same thing to me that you charge the papers with doing. I am telling you flat out, once and for all, that there is no truth to the Foisie story as far as it deals with me. That is all there is to it, and I must add that I deeply resent your questioning my word in this manner."

Surprisingly, that ended the discussion. The President simply did not respond. He never mentioned the incident again, and, if anything, our relationship grew closer. I learned later that Moyers told the President he was sure I had not talked to Foisie.

When the President and I finally got down to business, I told him that I had been deeply impressed by the dedication and energy of the Americans in Vietnam, and that it was clear that the American buildup and bombing had prevented the defeat of our South Vietnamese allies in 1965. But the response of the North Vietnamese to the American buildup had been a counter-escalation, which neither our bombing nor our ground troops seemed able to cut off. I said our combined forces could not defeat the Vietcong by eliminating them or by driving them into North Vietnam. Perhaps, I said, we could achieve our objectives if we made it absolutely clear to Hanoi that the United States would sustain a prolonged and major military effort in South Vietnam. Over the next few weeks, I gave a similar assessment to Dean Rusk, Bob McNamara, and McGeorge Bundy.

This was the situation when McNamara returned from another one of his periodic trips to the war front, later in November, and presented the President with a new and extraordinarily difficult pair of decisions to make. Westmoreland asked for a staggering increase in American troop strength, to at least four hundred thousand and perhaps as many as six hundred thousand by 1967. McNamara supported Westmoreland's request, but on the air attacks against North Vietnam he and Westmoreland disagreed sharply. McNamara recommended that the bombing be suspended around Christmastime for at least three weeks before the beginning of the next phase of the military buildup, in an effort to start negotiations. Westmoreland wanted air attacks against the infiltration routes to be increased, immediately.

I first heard about the battle over the new troop buildup and McNamara's recommended bombing pause—matters that were to have repercussions for the epic debate of 1968—at a small meeting in the White House on December 6, 1965. That afternoon, in a conference with Dean Rusk, McNamara, and McGeorge Bundy at the State Department, I expressed my concern in strong language: "Where the hell are we going? I have the feeling we are getting further and further into this war with no prospect of a return. We are fighting the kind of war that Mao Tse-tung would have us fight. I agree we must do the job—I am sure of that. But

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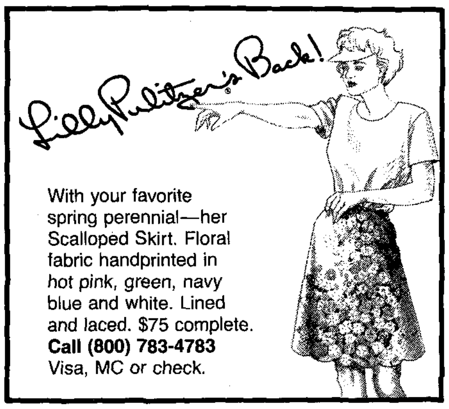
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couldn't we use air power while holding our ground troops in more defensive positions? Can we avoid sending six hundred thousand men to fight in these jungles? We must try to get the job done with less costly means."

I was alone in opposing both the bombing pause and the troop buildup. Everyone else present supported both the buildup and the pause (McNamara's position) or the troop buildup without the bombing pause (the Joint Chiefs' position) or the bombing pause without the troop buildup (Ball's strong preference). My opposition to the Christmas bombing pause became one of the primary factors in the emergence of my reputation as a hawk. Later, my reasoning was forgotten and my position reduced to one simple point—that I had opposed a bombing halt. Yet I felt then, and still feel today, that my reasons for opposing a bombing pause were consistent with my fundamental desire, which never changed, to find the quickest way out of Vietnam.

On December 18th, the President began two days of highly emotional meetings in the Cabinet Room. The group consulted was smaller than the one at the meeting in July—only the President, Rusk, McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, George Ball, Jack Valenti, Alexis Johnson, who was the Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs (and who had just completed a tour as Deputy Ambassador in Saigon), and me. One other outsider joined our meetings, Justice Fortas. When the fact of the meetings became public, a few days later, neither Fortas's name nor mine was released to the press.

McNamara argued that the proposed pause might produce a response from Hanoi, and said that even if it failed it would show the world that the United States had "walked the last mile" for peace before announcing any further troop increases. Rusk also supported McNamara's proposal as the best way to show the American public and the rest of the world that we had "done everything that could be done for peace."

Visibly annoyed by the suggestion that anyone might question his peaceful motives, the President interrupted Rusk, asking, "Haven't we already demonstrated this?"

Rusk skillfully defused the President's anger: "To my satisfaction but not to that of the American people."

After giving several reasons that he favored the bombing halt on political and diplomatic grounds, McNamara added a comment that surprised me: "Moreover, a military solution to the problem is not certain—I estimate it to be one out of three or one out of two. Ultimately, we must search for a diplomatic solution."

The President fixed his mournful gaze on McNamara and said, "Then no matter what we do in the military field there is no sure victory?"

For the first time in my presence, McNamara hinted at an inner doubt, but he masked it with his usual tone of crisp authority and precision. "That's right," he said. "We have been too optimistic. One in three or one in two is my estimate."

Rusk broke in, presumably to take the edge off McNamara's pessimism. "I'm more optimistic than that, but I can't prove it," he said.

McNamara persisted. "I'm saying that we may never find a military solution. We need to explore other means. Our military approach is an unlikely route to a successful conclusion." He then tried to explain: "I know this may seem like a contradiction. I recognize that I have come to you for a huge increase in Vietnam, to at least four hundred thousand men, yet at the same time our actions may lead to counter-escalation by the North Vietnamese and some undesirable results. Therefore, I am simply suggesting that we look for other alternatives first."

Just before the meeting adjourned for lunch, the President warned, in very strong language, about the danger of leaks.

McNamara's response seemed unusually personal. "The greatest danger of leaks is here in this room," he said. "You can't discuss this sort of thing even with your wife. I can visualize stories about all this, and I am concerned with being embarrassed. Please, let us discuss this with no other human beings outside this room."

After lunch, the meeting continued for hours without a decision. Once again, as in the Camp David meeting in July, I was on the opposite side from McNamara, but this time I was also in disagreement with George Ball, whose disengagement strategy, given the course on which the President had embarked, was no longer within the realm of what the President would consider. I knew that McNamara would have the greatest influence on the President: his very unpredictability probably increased his leverage. But I felt that his recommendations did not constitute a coherent strategy. When the President asked for my views, I responded:

> The arguments for a bombing pause have been well presented. But even if I accepted them I would feel deep concern over this move. I want to end the war. I have tried to envision the circumstances under which North Vietnam would talk. I think they will talk only if they believe they are not going to win the war in South Vietnam. I don't believe they are at that stage now. . . . They believe that ultimately the United States will tire of the war and go home and North Vietnam will prevail. . . .
>
> Given this situation, I believe the President and our government have talked enough about peace at this time. I don't believe such talk will do any good in the present circumstances. . . . When the time comes to resume the bombing—and it will resume, because the chances are only one in twenty or one in fifty that the bombing halt will produce a response—the U.S. government will come under even more intense pressure from those who want to extend the pause, on one hand, and those who will argue that its failure requires us to escalate still further. I do not like the President to take a position that is so clearly unproductive. Finally, I am deeply concerned that a bombing pause will be viewed as a gimmick. The time may well come when a bombing pause would be valuable. If there is a chance that it would be successful, then I would favor it. But not now.

When I finished my statement, President Johnson wrote a note and pushed it across the table to me. Its tone was different from the note George Ball had passed to me in the same room a few months earlier, but the sentiment was similar, only phrased in a uniquely Johnsonian manner, and I saved, and savored, it:

> Magnificent—
> To sum up—
> As Abraham Lincoln said—
> "You can't fertilize a field by farting thru the fence."

Shortly after that meeting, the President revealed his final decision: a bombing pause of unspecified length, during which he would send high-level emissaries around the world to plead the cause of peace, and tentative approval of another large troop increase, the exact number to be worked out later. Once again, I had presented my views and lost.

As soon as the pause in the bombing of the North began, the American military launched large-scale ground-force operations supported by heavy air attacks *inside* South Vietnam. From a military point of view, that action was justifiable on the basis that everything possible had to be done to prevent the North Vietnamese from "taking advantage" of the pause, but the American offensive also had the effect of negating whatever message McNamara and the President intended to convey by the bombing pause. It was an incomprehensible combination of signals that we were sending to Hanoi, I thought. Nonetheless, the entire world watched—and hoped, against all reasonable expectations—for some response from Hanoi. Finally, in late January, the President, following his standard pattern, convened his advisers to discuss the situation, before a smaller meeting in which he announced his decision. I attended the first of these sessions, on January 28, 1966. The President invited three other outsiders—John McCloy, former C.I.A. Director Allen Dulles, and our Korean War negotiator, Arthur Dean. Bundy, in his record of the meeting, was elegant, as always, in the use of the English language, and he referred to McCloy, Dulles, Dean, and me as the Wise Men—a name that, applied later to a larger group of advisers, became a part of the Washington vocabulary, and even a book title.

"At some appropriate time, we should resume carefully controlled bombing," McNamara said. "I don't think that the American people will long support a government which will not back up four hundred thousand of its own troops with bombing." At the same time, he said, he doubted whether a resumption of the bombing would affect Hanoi's will to fight. "No matter what bombing we do, we will need more men," he said. "There is a chance that doubling our force over a period of six months might be sufficient to break their will."

When the President asked me to comment, I began simply, "I want to get out of Vietnam," and then I deliberately paraphrased the closing section of the Clifford-Elsey report on American-Soviet relations, which my assistant George Elsey and I had written in 1946:

> The only way to get out of Vietnam is to persuade Hanoi that "we are too strong to be beaten and too determined to be fright-

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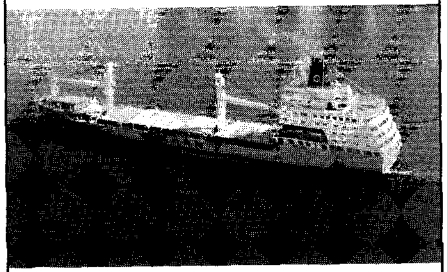

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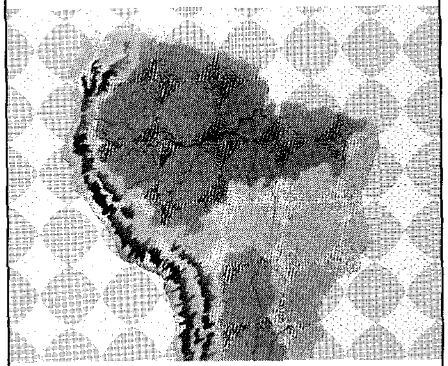

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ened." If we are to pursue our present course, we must make the war more costly to Hanoi. I want to resume the bombing. I don't want to get trapped by a phony peace bid which immobilizes our ability to resume the bombing. We must fight the war where we are strongest—in the air. North Vietnam is not afraid of our ground troops.

The die was cast. The next day, the President and his advisers did not debate resumption—that had been decided on—but discussed its timing and the nature of the targets to be hit. At 10 A.M. on January 31st, even as American Air Force planes were streaking north once more, the President announced the resumption of the bombing.

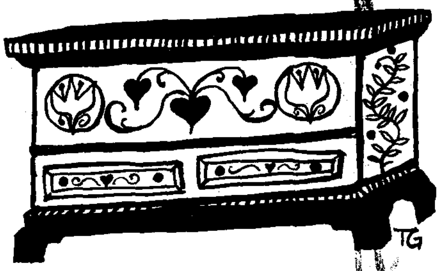
The thirty-seven-day bombing pause left a particularly unfortunate legacy. In 1968, its memory was a significant factor in raising doubts in the President's mind about another pause, even though by then a full bombing halt was the appropriate course to follow.

AT times, President Johnson's efforts to bring me into the Administration seemed quite casual, and even roundabout. In 1965, for instance, he asked my wife if she thought I might be interested in succeeding Adlai Stevenson, who had just died, as the American Ambassador to the United Nations. Marny, startled both by the suggestion and by the President's use of her as a go-between, answered that she had no idea what my reaction would be, and relayed the suggestion to me. It was relatively easy to avoid an offer—if one could even call it that—made in such an indirect, characteristically Johnsonian manner. When I next saw the President, I raised the matter, saying that I was not the right man for the post. Similarly, I was able to reject, before either reached the status of a formal offer, hints from President Johnson that he might like me to become his national-security assistant upon McGeorge Bundy's departure, and then that he was thinking of me for director of Central Intelligence when it was clear that Admiral Raborn was unsuitable for the job. Again, as with the United Nations suggestion, there was no real offer, no real rejection. This was the way Lyndon Johnson liked to operate. He hated to be rejected, and this indirect method allowed him to maintain that since he had not made an offer he had not been rejected.

There were four other occasions when President Johnson asked me to join his Administration, and, by a curious coincidence, three of them were connected with the career of Nicholas deB. Katzenbach. Katzenbach had served as Robert Kennedy's deputy in the Justice Department and had become Acting Attorney General when Kennedy resigned, in September of 1964, to run for the Senate from New York. A large man with a stooped posture that was the result of slow-acting but serious bone deterioration, Katzenbach was subtle, low-key, and possessed of a wry and delightful sense of humor. He had one of the most brilliant and creative legal minds I have encountered, and approached public service with total seriousness. At the same time, he saw the ironic side of service in Washington—the endless games some people play, the petty deals that are often necessary in the pursuit of objectives of great purpose. Katzenbach once observed of a senior White House aide, "The problem with that man is that he thinks government is just a game. He doesn't care about the consequences of his actions." One of Nick's major strengths was something lacking in most Washington policymakers: an uncanny ability to listen to two fiercely contending sides in a dispute, each unalterably opposed to the other, and devise a compromise acceptable to both.

Nick Katzenbach deserved to become the next Attorney General, but his close association with Bobby Kennedy created an unjustified suspicion of him in the eyes of Lyndon Johnson. Undecided about how to proceed, Johnson simply left Katzenbach in the top post as Acting Attorney General. At first, Katzenbach regarded the situation as awkward but acceptable. Finally, however, in early January, 1965, he informed the President that it was not in anyone's interests for him to continue to function as the nation's chief law-enforcement officer unless his status was resolved before the new session of Congress got under way.

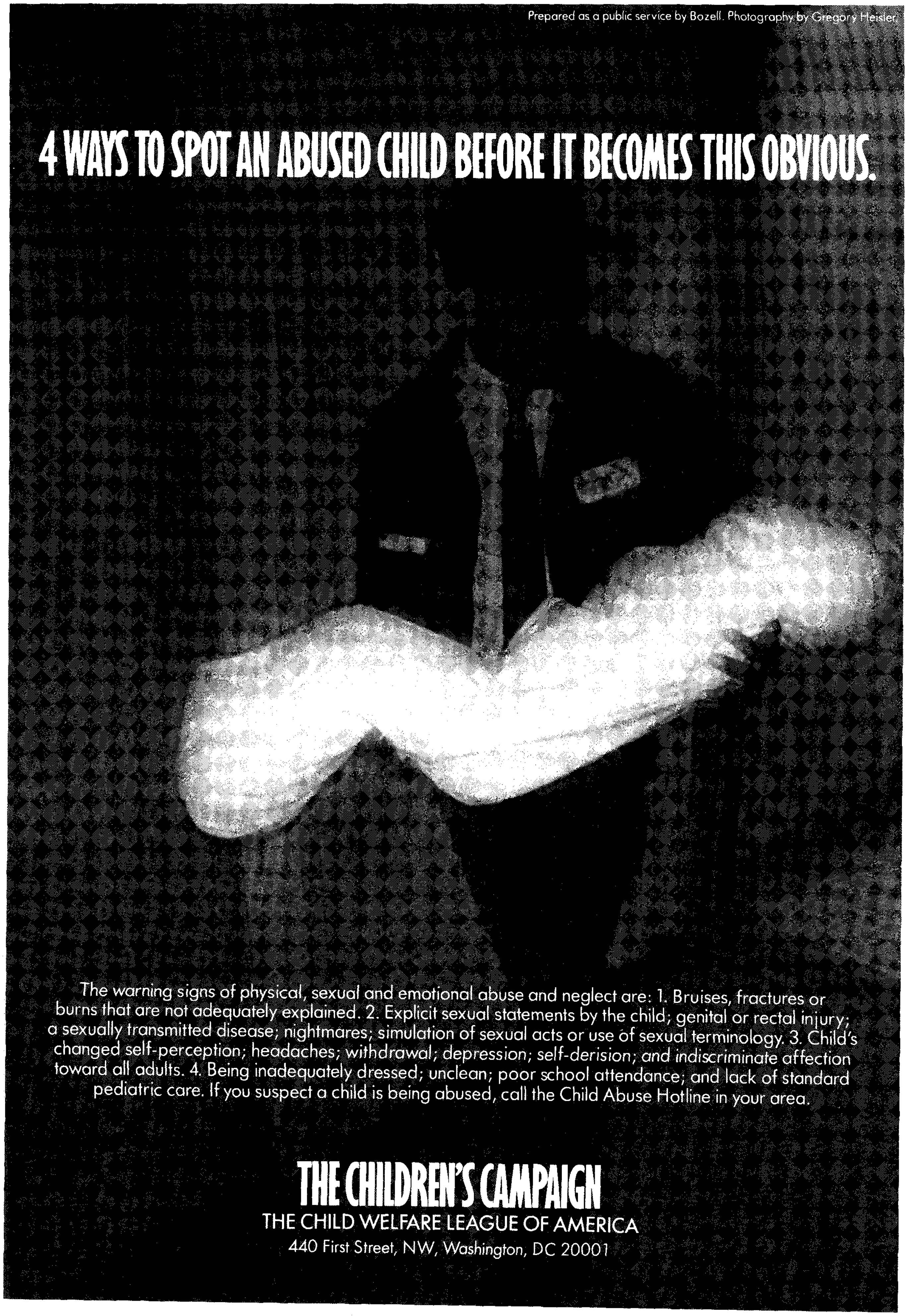
Late in 1964, the President had asked me, in his usual indirect manner, to become Attorney General. Responding in kind, I said I was completely happy as a private lawyer. I hoped that the conversation would prevent a formal offer. It did not. In mid-January, following Katzenbach's request to have his status resolved, the President raised the idea again with me. I said that, while I was flattered, I had always considered myself an advocate, and felt that presiding over the Department of Justice, with its many divisions and administrative responsibilities, would not be an effective use of my services. The truth was that as a lawyer I liked the freedom of practicing on my own. I preferred presenting my own case to overseeing scores of other litigators and bureaucrats. Besides, with the important exception of civil rights, the policy issues facing the Justice Department did not hold great fascination for me.



I thought the subject closed, but on January 27, 1965 (one week after his Inauguration and less than two weeks before the beginning of the bombing of North Vietnam), the President invited me to luncheon in the family quarters of the White House with Abe Fortas, Lady Bird, and the two Johnson daughters. At the end of our meal, presumably by prearrangement, the three women left the room, and Fortas and Johnson began telling me why I should become Attorney General. It was not easy to say no to Lyndon Johnson without getting him mad, but I managed to do so, using the same arguments I had used before. In the course of our discussion, the President finally decided that since I was adamant in my refusal he would offer Katzenbach, on a permanent basis, the position that he was already carrying out so admirably. The next day, the President nominated him as Attorney General.

Johnson's next serious attempt to bring me into the Administration took place after George Ball decided to leave the State Department, in the summer of 1966. President Johnson, again backed by Abe Fortas, asked me to replace Ball. It was not hard to turn this offer down: I pointed out that it would seriously undercut Secretary Rusk's position if a person known to be a close personal friend and adviser of the President became Under-Secretary of State. The President accepted this reasoning but said that he was not through trying to bring me into the Administration.

The President then asked Katzen-



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bach if he would step down from the Cabinet to succeed Ball. Challenged by the opportunity to work on foreign policy, Nick agreed. This reopened the top post at Justice, and led to the most memorable of Lyndon Johnson's attempts to bring me into the Administration, which came after we returned from the President's summit conference with Asian leaders in the Philippines.

On October 18, 1966, President Johnson called from Hawaii, where he had been meeting with his military commanders, and asked if I would join him in the Philippines for his summit conference. Two days later, I flew with Dean Rusk and his party to the Philippines. Reaching Manila on the evening of October 21st, we went directly to the famous but faded Manila Hotel, where General Douglas MacArthur had lived before the Second World War. The Manila summit had been conceived by Lyndon Johnson as a meeting of the leaders of all the nations with troops in Vietnam, and brought to the Philippine capital not only Thieu and Ky, from Saigon, but also President Chung Hee Park of South Korea, and three Prime Ministers: Thanom Kittikachorn of Thailand, Harold Holt of Australia, and Keith Holyoake of New Zealand. Our host was the new President of the Philippines, Ferdinand E. Marcos.

At the time, Washington viewed Marcos as the great democratic hope of Asia. He had won a relatively fair election for President in November, 1965, and his naked seizure of "emergency" powers under martial law was still over six years away. A classified briefing note prepared by the State Department illustrates the euphoria with which Washington regarded Marcos in those early years. He was "the most skilled, vigorous, and attractive leader the Philippines has produced since Ramon Magsaysay more than ten years ago," it read, and his "leadership represents a 'last chance' of the Philippines to achieve a peaceful transition to modernism under democratic processes." I watched Marcos and his wife, Imelda, with fascination during the conference. Both had been educated in an American school system during the colonial period, and they were far more attuned to American culture than any of the other leaders at Manila. It was clear that the Marcoses, and especially Imelda Marcos, a former beauty queen, who in 1966 still had a youthful figure and a dazzling smile, had charmed Lyndon Johnson.

Although I was a private citizen, the President formally designated me the third-ranking member of the official American delegation, after him and Dean Rusk—an unusual arrangement, which fuelled public speculation that I might soon be entering the Administration. Rusk took the speculation in stride publicly, but he made no effort to engage me in conversation in the course of our travels. At the end of each day during the conference, I joined President Johnson in his hotel suite. In those private talks, Johnson was impressive and moving. He talked not about the war but about his desire to extend the benefits of the Great Society to the region. Johnson's vision of Asia's potential was accurate, even visionary, but, as it turned out, his dreams of regional coöperation and economic development could not be achieved until the war was over.

As a public-relations exercise, the Manila summit proved to be successful, leaving the impression that had been intended, which was that the United States, in the words of a Washington *Post* editorial, "did not stand alone." But as a way of improving the situation in Vietnam it was close to worthless. Little could be accomplished in such a setting. The plenary meetings were composed of lengthy statements, not dialogue. An honest review of the political and military difficulties confronting the allies was avoided.

After the state dinner, everyone, from the chiefs of state down to junior staff officers, moved to an open veranda beside the Manila River, where the hot, muggy atmosphere was made even more oppressive by a low ceiling and the body heat of a throng of people. As patrol boats tooled along the river in front of us, a band played American dance music of the nineteen-forties and fifties. I thought the scene already surreal enough, but then I wandered over to a group of people standing silently in a large circle near the center of the dance floor. There, in the middle of the crowd, were Lyndon Johnson and Imelda Marcos, dancing. Moving slowly, in a sort of shuffle, he towered over her, his face mournful, his eyes looking beyond the gaping crowd, his mind seemingly far from Manila and his dance partner. Imelda, radiant in her trademark Filipino dress, with its butterfly shoulders and tight waist, was smiling up at Johnson, smiling at the cameras, smiling in total triumph as her friends and retainers looked on in awe and amazement. The scene later became a world-famous symbol, reduced to a cruel drawing by David Levine. But at that moment, as I sweltered in the Southeast Asian heat, the scene carried no symbolism for me. I merely thought, Poor Lyndon—he really looks miserable.

On October 26th, the day after the Manila summit ended, the President made his celebrated secret trip to Vietnam. During the days leading up to the surprise visit, a heated debate had taken place over whether or not the risks to the President were too great. Dean Rusk, Henry Cabot Lodge, and I favored the trip, but the main advocate was General Westmoreland, on whose shoulders the burdens of security and logistics would fall. So tight was the security—the President having said that the trip would be cancelled instantly if it leaked—that when I was summoned by Bill Moyers to a midday meeting in the Manila Embassy on the twenty-sixth I was unaware that the decision had actually been made.

The deception and the efforts at security were the greatest I had ever encountered. When I arrived, I was closeted with several other members of the Presidential party. Meanwhile, the White House press corps was summoned to a special briefing at the Embassy. When the correspondents had filled the room, Moyers closed the curtains, and told them that they were going to Vietnam. Guards at the door kept anyone from entering or leaving the room.

The visit to Cam Ranh Bay was one of the emotional high points of the Johnson Presidency. It was the first trip by a President to American troops in a war zone since Franklin Roosevelt visited G.I.s during the Casablanca conference, in January, 1943, and it lasted only two hours and twenty-four minutes, but the impressions on both sides lingered for a long time. It is hard to describe the emotions that came from seeing the Commander-in-Chief with his troops in the combat zone. Hearing the national anthem played by a military band as the wind whipped in from the South China Sea, feeling the strange energy that comes from men at war, seeing the President walking among soldiers who carried M-16s or lay in hospital beds, no one—hawk or dove, for or against the war—could remain unmoved.

President Johnson made a quickly forgotten speech to the troops, but one remark of his, near the end of an informal talk he gave senior officers in a packed officers' club, became part of the Johnson legend. I stood next to Rusk, in the back of the overcrowded room, sweltering in the heat. "You are going to get everything you need," the President said, almost shouting. (The phrasing was artful—"everything you *need*," not "everything you *want*"—but it led to further misunderstanding between the military, which believed that it needed everything it wanted, and Johnson, who thought that it needed only what he gave it.) Then, warming to his audience, hoping that words could somehow shorten the war, Johnson reached back to his Texas roots and, speaking with unfeigned emotion, told the officers to "come home with the coonskin on the wall." The phrase stuck: for the rest of the war, men joked about "nailing that coonskin to the wall."

The trip to Cam Ranh Bay had an unfortunate effect on the President. Because he had pressed the flesh of the soldiers in Vietnam, had visited the wounded in the field hospital, had seen the war—or so he thought—firsthand, his commitment to the struggle increased exponentially. He was utterly sincere when he told people at the time, and wrote later, "I have never been more moved by any group I have talked to, never in my life."

As 1967 began, I still believed that if we persevered Hanoi would have to reconsider its war aims and its strategy. Every official assessment reaching Washington supported this view. In the spring of 1967, the C.I.A.'s top Vietnam expert, George Carver, told the P.F.I.A.B. that by the fall of 1968 the situation should be dramatically improved. I was impressed by such predictions, yet not totally convinced. One of the best reporters of the era, Chalmers Roberts, of the Washington *Post*, recorded in his memoirs a fairly typical comment of mine from that period: while the commitment in Vietnam was a "great decision," I had said to him, "we will go through hell before it is over."

"Mind you, only one doctor out of ten recommends it."

• •

TWO weeks after we returned from Asia, the President checked into Bethesda Naval Hospital for surgery to remove a throat polyp and also to repair a hernia resulting from the gallbladder operation of the previous year—an operation made famous by his public display of his surgical scar. While he was in the hospital, he asked to see me. His hospital suite had been decorated with oil paintings of the L.B.J. Ranch, and his familiar three-screen television set had been placed in the room, so he could watch all three network news broadcasts at once—a habit that most of his aides and friends found maddening. When I entered, I saw that he had needles and tubes in his arms. He motioned to me to pull a chair close to his bed. Once I had done so, he whispered, "I very much appreciate your coming out, because I have a very important matter to take up with you."

His voice was weak and hoarse. "I am an old man," he said, ignoring the fact that I was older than he by a year and a half. Grabbing my arm, he reached over with his other hand to hold my hand in both of his. "I know you're going to come through for me on this, Clark," he went on. "I'm laid low here, I've got a tough time coming up. I want you to become my Attorney General." Then came the stopper, with which Johnson had nailed so many people: "So often have I called on you in the past, maybe sometimes you might have been reluctant, but you always wind up doing what I ask you to do. Do this for your President."

"I'll think about it, Mr. President," I said. That was all I could manage.

The pressure increased two days later, when, for the first and only time in our long relationship, Lady Bird Johnson involved herself in a substantive issue between her husband and me. "Lyndon feels so strongly about this," she said to me. "He is so sure that you are going to accept, and I am, too. It is really important to him. I hope you will do it for both of us."

Lady Bird made it tougher, but I still intended to refuse. The next day, I returned to the hospital. The President's throat surgery had taken place by this time, and he was temporarily unable to speak. He communicated by writing on a notepad. (Lady Bird told the press that she had never seen her

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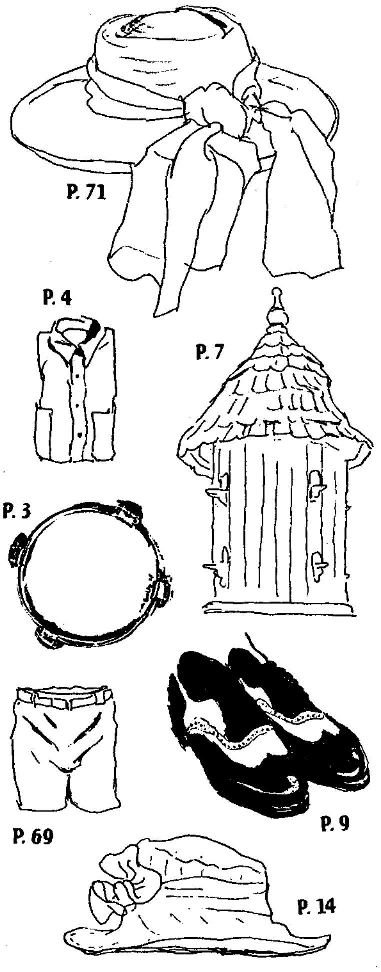

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husband speechless before, "and we are going to make the most of it.")

"Mr. President," I began, "I want to do my best to have you understand why I must turn down your request that I become Attorney General. For a man to go into a job, it must be a job in which he is deeply interested, one in which he feels that he has a very real contribution to make. With the Justice Department at this particular stage of its existence, it is very clear to me that I'm not the right man. I would not have my heart in it, and it isn't what I ought to be doing. My background and training in government fall heavily within the national-security and foreign-policy field, and that is where my interest lies."

I thought that the President's feelings were probably hurt by my comments, but, of course, he could not speak. Perhaps he accepted my explanation; in any case, I am sure he saw the finality of my decision. Taking out his notepad, he simply wrote, "Who should I select as A.G.?" I responded by saying that Katzenbach's deputy, Ramsey Clark, deserved serious consideration, but I asked for more time to think about it. I believe now that, in considering the appointment, President Johnson came to the conclusion that Ramsey Clark was actually the perfect choice. Johnson, like Kennedy, wanted to be the first President to appoint a black Justice to the Supreme Court, and had long hoped to appoint Thurgood Marshall, who had successfully argued the case for school desegregation before the Court in 1954. The President probably foresaw that Ramsey Clark's appointment to Justice would speed that process by bringing about the retirement of Ramsey's father, Justice Tom Clark.

Everything eventually went according to plan. Ramsey Clark's nomination was announced on February 28, 1967, and on the same day his father made public his intention to retire from the Supreme Court. Thurgood Marshall was nominated to succeed Tom Clark on June 13th.

IN 1967, the officials in charge of the war thought that it was going better than ever. A steady stream of optimistic reports came from Ellsworth Bunker, the new American Ambassador in Saigon. Very dramatically, General Westmoreland told a cheering joint session of Congress on April 28, 1967, that the allies would prevail. McNamara continued to advocate our policies with a personal dynamism and an apparent conviction that disguised or minimized any underlying doubts he might be feeling. At a meeting in July, after returning from another trip to Vietnam, he attacked press reports that suggested that the war was a stalemate. "There is not a military stalemate in Vietnam," McNamara asserted with vigor. The reporting from Vietnam was "cynical and skeptical," he said, and should be heavily discounted. He added that progress in the pacification program had exceeded his expectations.

I asked McNamara if he agreed with what I felt was a growing public sentiment in this country that the war in Vietnam "can't be won."

"There is a limit to what the enemy can send into the South," McNamara replied. "We are destroying a significant number of the large units. For the first time, I feel that if we follow the same program we will win the war and end the fighting."

The President was so encouraged by McNamara's expressions of optimism that he wrote down, and saved, our exchange—something he rarely did. But McNamara was not so positive when it came to the bombing of the North. He was not confident of the effectiveness of intensive bombing, he said, and he opposed military requests to expand it. General Wheeler disagreed openly. That was the first time I had seen the normally amiable and mild-mannered chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff take on his superior in the chain of command.

President Johnson said he agreed that more troops were needed, but he wanted McNamara and Wheeler to "shave" the number. He said that an effort had to be made to get more troops from the troop-contributing nations that had met with him at Manila, and announced that he was considering sending General Taylor and me on a mission to see our allies in the Far East.

The President had two clear goals in mind for our mission. First, he wanted Taylor and me to obtain agreement on another summit meeting, in 1967 or early 1968, preferably in Bangkok. Second, having decided to increase American troop levels to five hundred and twenty-five thousand men, he desperately wanted new commitments from the nations of the region, in order to show the American people that the weight of an Asian war was not being carried entirely on the shoulders of Americans. Before I set out, these seemed to me to be eminently reasonable, and achievable, objectives.

As soon as our trip was announced, however, a serious problem arose. The first newspaper stories on the trip described all too accurately our primary purpose, and forced us to revise our goals, at least for public consumption. The New York *Times* headline was typical: "JOHNSON SENDING 2 AIDES TO PRESS ALLIES FOR TROOPS." Such articles made us look, in Taylor's phrase, like "an arm-twisting delegation off to squeeze more troops from laggard allies reluctant to do their fair share." Every government we planned to visit except South Korea's had a significant antiwar opposition of its own. As a result, most of the American Embassies on our route sent Washington urgent telegrams urging us not to portray the trip as a search for additional troops. Marcos went a step further: saying that he "saw no need" for us to visit him so soon after the Manila summit, he cancelled our visit to the Philippines after it had been announced. To minimize the damage, Taylor and I beat a quick retreat with the press, saying, somewhat disingenuously, that the purpose of the trip was simply to reassure our Asian allies, get a firsthand assessment of the situation, and discuss another summit.

The day after our trip was made public, I received a short note from Vice-President Hubert Humphrey offering some suggestions and wishing us well on our mission. What was memorable about his note was its poignant opening words, which spoke volumes about the obscure role to which Lyndon Johnson had relegated his Vice-President: "I read in the press this morning of the assignment given you by the President. I am so pleased . . . "

Taylor and I left Andrews Air Force Base in an Air Force jet on the morning of July 22, 1967, accompanied by, among others, Richard Steadman, an impressive young Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, who later worked closely with me in the Pentagon, and Freeman Matthews, Jr., a member of the State Department's Vietnam Working Group.

We began in Saigon, with the usual round of briefings. A national election was scheduled for September 3rd, and President Johnson had asked us to convey a strong personal message to Chief of State Thieu and Prime Minister Ky concerning the importance to the United States of a fair and free election. This message we dutifully delivered over a lunch at the Presidential Palace that included clear soup with birds' heads in it—a rare delicacy, our hosts told us. I gently sipped the broth and sought to avoid the delicacy itself, which stared up at me from the bottom of the soup bowl.

General Westmoreland and Ambassador Bunker gave us the most optimistic report on the progress of the war I ever received. Both men told us that the tide had turned definitively in favor of Saigon. They said that the level of Communist activity was gradually but steadily decreasing, and, notwithstanding the tension that had been evident between Thieu and Ky, they foresaw growing political stability in Saigon. This was almost the last good news that Taylor and I received on our trip. To put it simply, the troop-contributing nations did not want to contribute any more troops; in fact, all of them except Korea made it clear that they were uncomfortable with having sent any soldiers to Vietnam in the first place. We reported to President Johnson upon our return, "Our hosts liked to talk more about what they had done in the past rather than what they would be willing to do in the future." Each country had a perfectly logical explanation for this: local conditions, either economic or political or both. But the bottom line was always the same.

Taylor and I came home on August 5th. As always, we had got on together very well, but we had interpreted our trip in very different ways. Taylor had more or less accepted the explanation that each nation produced to avoid a significant additional commitment, but I returned both puzzled and troubled by our failure to get more support from our allies. I could only hint at the level of my concern in our joint report to the President, since Taylor did not share it, but privately I told President Johnson that I was shocked at the failure of the countries whose security we be-

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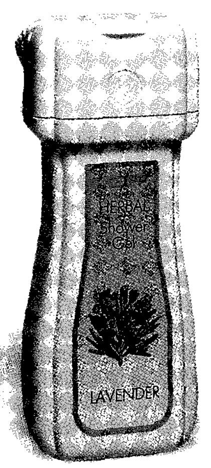

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lieved we were defending to do more for themselves. Australia, which had given so much during the Second World War, disappointed us the most. Johnson, who remembered the country with special affection from his brief service there in the war, had counted on coöperation from Harold Holt.

On the morning we returned to Washington, Robert Pierpoint, of CBS News, described our trip in a succinct and accurate commentary that raised Johnson's ire and led to a few hours of Presidential fury:

> It is not that [President Johnson's] two travelling emissaries are not highly competent men—they are. But all the evidence indicates their assignment was impossible. While it was never quite officially admitted, they went out to Asia to persuade the other Allied nations fighting in Vietnam to send more troops and to agree to the time and place for another summit meeting. . . . As for the idea of an Asian allies' summit meeting this fall, the White House has already downgraded it from probable to possible, and after today's Taylor-Clifford report to the President, it could sink clear out of sight.

As Pierpoint suggested, there would be no more Asian summits, and few additional Asian troops, during the Johnson Administration. The Asian and Pacific nations were beginning to distance themselves slightly from America's efforts in Vietnam, although they would not say so publicly. Any effort to bring the leaders together again would only highlight the situation.

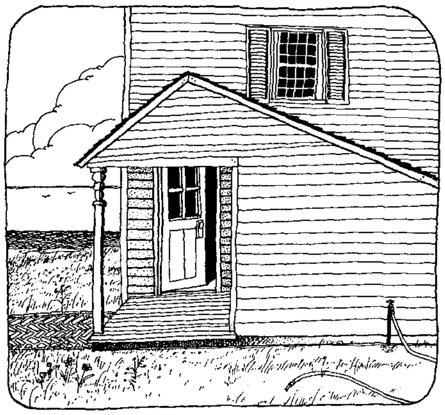
Taylor and I reported to President Johnson and his associates on August 5th.

"If we continue the war at the same level of ground and air effort, I am unable to see that it will bring us any nearer to our goal," I said. "A year from now, we will once again be taking stock, and we may well be no nearer our objectives than we are today." No one needed reminding that a year hence we would also be in a Presidential campaign. "I found no concern anywhere in Asia that the Chinese might enter the war, and there was the same reaction to the possibility of the Soviets' entering," I continued. "There seems to be no diminution of Hanoi's will to continue the war. If we are to have a chance to get this war over with, we must hit them harder."

I had returned from my trip to Asia with two seemingly contradictory points of view. On the one hand, the trip had buried for me, once and for all, Washington's treasured domino theory. On the other hand, I continued to support our policy, because it appeared to be the best way to get out of the war. While I had not yet reached the point where I could see that at the end of this particular tunnel there simply was no light, serious doubts had been sown.

THE early fall of 1967 was the last time that the Johnson Administration was unified on Vietnam. Within a few months, McNamara would leave office, the Vietnam Communists would stun the world with a nationwide military offensive, the political landscape at home would change dramatically, and I would find myself back in the government, as Secretary of Defense. In October, though, none of this was in the wind. Rostow, Bunker, Westmoreland, and the head of the pacification effort in Vietnam, Robert W. Komer, were all continuing to report significant gains in the war. The White House launched a multimedia public-relations campaign, its climax another trip to Washington by General Westmoreland and Ambassador Bunker, to persuade the American public that the war was being won. Westmoreland told the National Press Club that "the end begins to come into view," and that it might be possible to reduce American troop levels in 1969. These statements and the trip by Westmoreland and Bunker proved, in the light of subsequent events, to be grievous errors in both tactics and judgment. At the time, however, Westmoreland's briefings and predictions impressed almost everyone, including me.

Efforts to communicate with Hanoi were intensified. During the late summer, the President had made an effort to open secret communications directly with Ho Chi Minh through two left-wing European academics, one of whom had known the North Vietnamese leader for more than twenty years. Their American contact was Henry Kissinger, who had survived the problems created in 1965 by the Foisie article. Kissinger's two friends saw Ho and his Prime Minister, Pham Van Dong, in Hanoi during the summer. Using Kissinger as the messenger, Johnson had offered to stop the bombing of North Vietnam if Hanoi "would enter promptly into productive discussions with the United States." To give extra credibility to his message, Johnson repeated his offer publicly, in a major speech, on September 29th, that contained what came to be known as "the San Antonio formula," after the city in which he announced it. A few months later, the exact meaning of the San Antonio formula became an issue during my confirmation.



Kissinger would be returning to Europe to see his two friends. On October 18th, I attended a meeting at the White House to discuss his instructions. Kissinger had sought a face-to-face meeting with the North Vietnamese in Paris, but they had refused to see him, replying to all his messages with strongly worded rejections. The President said he suspected that the whole setup might be a trick to get us to reduce the bombing. Rusk wanted to keep the channel open, but opposed any halt in the bombing without a commitment from Hanoi to take some deëscalatory action.

With a few exceptions—Kissinger and I among them—everyone in the room was exhausted after close to seven years of government service, and I thought the exhaustion showed in the confused discussion, and in the excessive attention being paid to a minor and ineffective channel of communication with Hanoi. If one stripped away the drama of sending a message to Ho Chi Minh through secret intermediaries, I pointed out, Hanoi's position had not changed. I recommended terminating the Kissinger channel, on the ground that it would prolong the war by misleadingly encouraging Hanoi. If Hanoi wanted to talk to us or change position, it would be easy for it to notify us, directly or through the Soviets.

The President ended the discussion by turning to the academic from Harvard. "In my own mind, I feel they have failed to indicate any desire to talk, but I see no necessity of breaking off the channel. Let's see what happens before deciding on another bombing pause." The Kissinger channel never came to anything, but the San Antonio formula became the government's formal position. I remained convinced that when Hanoi was ready to change its position we would not need any intermediaries.

In November, two significant events took place that set the stage for the great drama of 1968. The first was the convening of a group of elder statesmen—the Wise Men—to advise the President on the war. The second was a dramatic change in Robert McNamara's official position on the war. The idea of convening a group of Wise Men originated during a discussion that Walt Rostow and I had with President Johnson. The President, recalling the comfort he had derived from earlier meetings with several elder statesmen, including Dean Acheson and John McCloy, said he wanted to hear from some of the senior statesmen again. He asked me to act as organizer and chairman of the effort, which, he said, he wished to formalize. After much discussion, the final group was chosen by President Johnson from a list that Rostow and I assembled. Bob Lovett and John McCloy were unable to attend, but the rest of the group met for drinks and dinner with Rusk and McNamara at the State Department on the evening of November 1, 1967, and the next day met for four hours with President Johnson. It was an impressive assemblage: Acheson; General of the Army Omar Bradley; George Ball; McGeorge Bundy; the former Korean War negotiator Arthur Dean; former Ambassador to France Douglas Dillon; Justice Fortas; Henry Cabot Lodge; and former Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Robert Murphy. They were joined by two elder statesmen still in the government: Ambassador-at-Large Averell Harriman and Maxwell Taylor, whom Johnson had kept on as a special consultant. Jim Jones, a White House assistant (and today chairman of the American Stock Exchange), kept notes of the meeting. I learned later that, behind our backs, junior State Department officers called us the WOMS, or Wise *Old* Men, but the mocking tone of the middle word was not included in reports on this group.

The briefings that first evening, by General Wheeler and by George Carver, of the C.I.A., set an upbeat and optimistic tone. When the group con-

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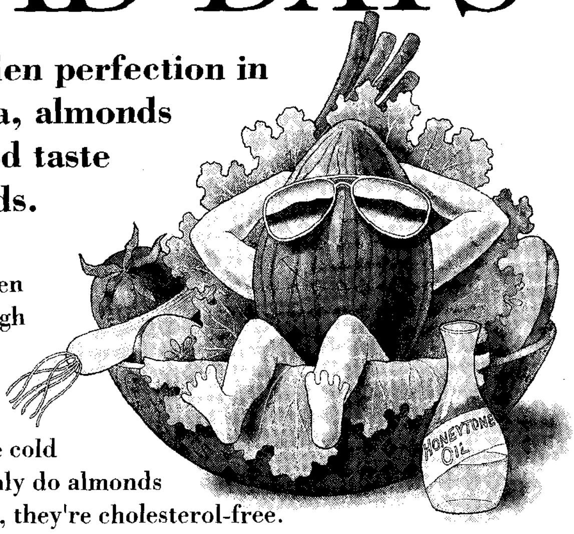

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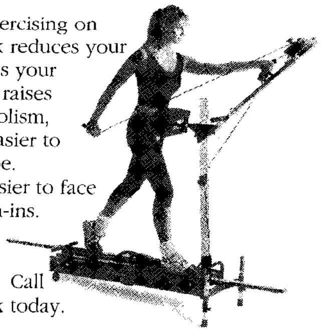

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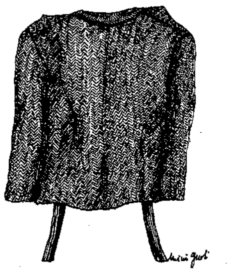
vened with the President the next morning, each of the participants, led by Acheson, told the President he should stand firm. When the President asked if we should get out of Vietnam, the group's response was, in the words of McGeorge Bundy's written summation, "a strong and unanimous negative." Even George Ball made only tactical suggestions for changing our policy, such as restricting the bombing of the North to the area around the demilitarized zone. "No one in this group thinks we should get out of the war," Ball said, to the obvious pleasure of the President.



But I noticed that Averell Harriman remained silent during this display of unanimity, looking straight ahead. At seventy-five, Harriman was the oldest man in the room. He wore a hearing aid, and on occasion he liked to let people think he was too deaf to follow the conversation. This was a sly trick: as soon as the discussion turned to the possibility of negotiations, Harriman suddenly seemed to wake up. Hoping to cap his long and distinguished career by heading the negotiating team, he had no intention of losing his access to the President by prematurely revealing the depths of his opposition to the war. A negotiation was "inevitable and necessary," he said—and that was all.

Late in the meeting, the President asked me to comment. "No matter what we do, this will never be a popular war," I said. "No wars have been popular, with the possible exception of World War II. But we must go on, because what we are doing is right. . . . Secretary McNamara said last night that perhaps his and Rusk's efforts since 1961 have been a failure. This is not true. . . . But any cessation of our efforts will be interpreted as a sign of weakness." As I finished my comments, Luci Johnson Nugent brought the President's five-month-old grandson, Patrick Lyndon Nugent, into the room and handed him to the President. For the rest of the meeting, as we continued to discuss the bombing of North Vietnam, the infant napped quietly in his grandfather's arms.

This first meeting with the Wise Men strengthened President Johnson's resolve at a critical moment. For, unknown to anyone else in the room except Rusk and Rostow, Lyndon Johnson had received a severe shock the previous day: Bob McNamara had virtually abandoned the policy he had played such a central role in creating.

IT was clear that, after almost seven years in the job, Bob McNamara was being pulled simultaneously in opposite directions by his deepening despair about the war and his loyalty to the President. During long and gruelling working days, he continued to oversee the war effort, selecting bombing targets, arguing with the Joint Chiefs, dealing with an increasingly distrustful Congress. But in the evenings he shared his growing doubts about the war with close friends—including, to Lyndon Johnson's special horror, Robert F. Kennedy.

Even though we worked together closely and remained friends, I cannot really explain how McNamara's views on the war actually evolved. He never discussed the matter with me, and it obviously caused him great and continuing pain. Finally, in 1984, after sixteen years of public silence and private anguish on the subject, he offered a limited insight into his thinking when he testified in the libel suit brought by General Westmoreland against CBS. Asked under oath what he believed and when he believed it, McNamara said, "My view was that it was unlikely that the war could be won by military means. . . . I certainly held that view at times in 1966, if not earlier." Yet, McNamara's underlying pessimism did not move him to advise the President against escalation until near the end of 1967. If he had, his counsel would have had an enormous effect on the policy that he had done so much to create.

By the time he sent the President a stunning memorandum outlining his views, on November 1, 1967, McNamara had been the focal point of the policy for so long, had made so many recommendations that failed to produce the anticipated result, and had made so many projections that turned out to be overoptimistic that his public credibility had begun to erode. In August, under intense grilling before the Senate Armed Services Committee, he had been unable to make a strong case for the continued bombing of the North, and, for the first time, the disagreements he was having in private with the Joint Chiefs of Staff became a matter of public record. Senator John Stennis, of Mississippi, publicly charged McNamara with having "shackled" our air campaign against North Vietnam, causing higher American casualties.

Johnson publicly defended McNamara against Stennis, and said there was no "deep division" in the Administration over the air war against the North, but in private the President was deeply troubled, especially since McNamara's testimony had not been cleared by the White House. The President still liked and respected McNamara enormously, but he was losing confidence in the judgment of his tormented aide, and was increasingly suspicious of his relationship with Bobby Kennedy. Instead of examining the reasons for McNamara's growing doubts about the war, he began to express doubts to Fortas and me about McNamara's loyalty and stability. He also worried about the strain that the job had placed on McNamara and his family. Bob's gracious and intense wife, Margaret, had developed an ailment that was often described by friends as "Bob's ulcer." One of their children, Craig, had broken with his father over the war. (The same was true of Dean Rusk: his younger son, Richard, also split with his father over the war. But—unlike McNamara—Rusk, the Iron Man, did not allow his family circumstances to affect his work.)

This situation might have festered for a long time before any action was taken. McNamara was still widely respected, and he continued to run the Pentagon with exceptional skill. From a political point of view, there was value in keeping McNamara in office through the 1968 election. But this option was foreclosed by McNamara himself when he precipitated the last act of the drama by airing the full dimensions of his doubts, for the first time, in the Tuesday Lunch on October 31st, and followed up that action the next day with his memorandum.

The Tuesday Lunch, President Johnson's most important regularly scheduled weekly meeting, had become a legend and also a bit of a nightmare in Washington by the latter part of 1967: because Johnson restricted it to "principals only," after every lunch the senior staff officers of each of the participants—Rusk, McNamara, Rostow, Helms, Wheeler, and, later, me—tried to reconstruct exactly what had been decided. Although a White House notetaker was usually present, disagreements and misunderstandings about what had been decided were still frequent.

But on October 31st there could be no misunderstanding McNamara's position. He had come to the private conclusion that "continuation of our present course of action in Southeast Asia would be dangerous, costly in lives, and unsatisfactory to the American people." The blockbuster memorandum he sent the President the next day—nine pages, single-spaced—had obviously been prepared in advance of the Tuesday Lunch. It argued for a radical change in policy. Because the views in the memorandum, he said dryly, "may be incompatible with your own," McNamara delivered it directly to the President, bypassing Rusk and Rostow. Johnson was stunned. He knew he could no longer contain or control "the McNamara problem": he would have to change either his Vietnam policy or his Defense Secretary. Ironically, the President ended up changing both. But that was not his intention.

McNamara's memorandum began by stating that "continuing our present course will not bring us by the end of 1968 enough closer to success, in the eyes of the American public, to prevent the continued erosion of popular support for our involvement in Vietnam." The memorandum recommended a "stabilization" of the war at its present level: giving Westmoreland no further troop increases; refusing permission to expand the war into Laos or Cambodia; accepting "slow but steady progress for whatever period is required to move the North Vietnamese to abandon their attempt to gain political control in South Vietnam by military means"; halting the bombing of North Vietnam before the end of 1967; and making an all-out effort to negotiate with Hanoi.

On November 2nd, after the meeting of the Wise Men, the President asked for my reaction to this memorandum, but, in order to obtain the most objective response and minimize the risks of a leak, he removed all identification from the memorandum, hoping to obscure its source. Although my rebuttal of McNamara probably contributed to President Johnson's decision to ask me to become Secretary of Defense, I ended up eventually advocating positions similar in many respects to those in the memorandum, which I attacked in November, 1967. My reply was heavily influenced by the meeting of the Wise Men. I stated that the memorandum's suggestions would probably retard "the possibility of concluding the conflict." I opposed, with "a loud and resounding 'no,' " the suggestion that we suspend the bombing "without any effort to extract a quid pro quo." I objected to the suggestion that we "stabilize" our forces in the South, on the ground that doing so would be interpreted as "a resigned and discouraged effort to find a way out of a conflict for which we had lost our will and dedication."

Some days after I sent my reply to the President, I learned that the President had separately asked Rusk, Bunker, Rostow, Westmoreland, and Fortas for their views on the McNamara memorandum, and that all had disagreed with its recommendations. The only document reaching the President that argued for a change in policy came from Nick Katzenbach. He sent the President a long and thoughtful memorandum in mid-November arguing eloquently for a bombing halt and for a shift of the weight of the war to the South Vietnamese in order to reduce American casualties. Katzenbach made an analogy that I remembered later as both striking and prophetic:

> Hanoi uses time the way the Russians used terrain before Napoleon's advance on Moscow, always retreating, losing every battle, but eventually creating conditions in which the enemy can no longer function. For Napoleon it was his long supply lines and the cold Russian winter; Hanoi hopes that for us it will be the mounting dissension, impatience, and frustration caused by a protracted war without fronts or other visible signs of success.... Time is the crucial element at this stage of our involvement in Vietnam. Can the tortoise of progress in Vietnam stay ahead of the hare of dissent at home?

McNamara's memorandum removed all doubt about whether he had to leave the Pentagon. It was to Lyndon Johnson's credit that he arranged this in a skillful and compassionate manner. Knowing that McNamara was in a fragile emotional state, and even fearing for his survival, the President found a perfect solution: he offered McNamara the job that he knew most interested him—the presidency of the World Bank. The outgoing president, George Woods, had asked McNamara informally in the spring if he would be

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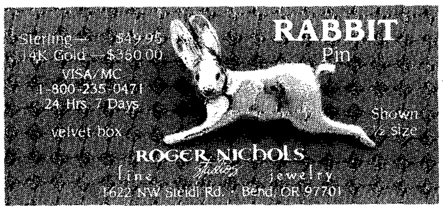

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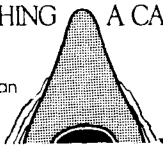


interested in the position. McNamara had made a noncommittal reply, but had mentioned the matter to President Johnson—because, he wrote the President later, he felt that it "might come to your attention and I did not want you to think I was planning to leave your Administration before you wanted me to do so." During the summer, Woods had asked the President if McNamara was available; failing to get any reply, he had reluctantly agreed to stay on for at least another year. Perhaps, on a subconscious level, McNamara's November 1st memorandum was a way of relieving the almost unbearable pressure building up inside him. In any case, within days after the memorandum reached the President's desk the United States had asked the World Bank's member nations to approve McNamara's nomination as its president.

Remarkably, the President never informed McNamara of his intention to nominate him; he simply did it. Perhaps he was concerned over the effect that the news would have on Bob; perhaps he did not want to leave the decision in McNamara's hands at a time when he was almost paralyzed with indecision. McNamara found out that he had been nominated only when Woods called to tell him that though the nomination was creating some controversy, he expected it to be approved. The news leaked shortly thereafter in the London *Financial Times*, and was confirmed by the White House after two hurried, confused days.

At the time, Robert S. McNamara was just fifty-one years old. In my years in Washington, only a handful of people below the Presidential level have dominated the scene: George Marshall, Dean Acheson, and Henry Kissinger all come to mind. But no one ever held the capital in sway more powerfully than McNamara, from 1961 until the end of 1967. Even at the end, beleaguered and exhausted, he remained, after the President, the dominant figure in town. The veteran journalist Hugh Sidey, writing in *Life*, captured the reaction to his departure with only slight exaggeration: "For Washington last week, waking up to the fact that Robert McNamara was leaving the Cabinet was like finding the Washington Monument missing one morning."

McNamara had transformed the Defense Department during his tenure. More than any of the men who had preceded him, he moved the military establishment toward what we had intended it to be at the time of the struggle over military reform in the late nineteen-forties—a struggle in which I had participated. It is not an exaggeration to say that the history of the Department of Defense will always be divided into the pre-McNamara and post-McNamara eras. Bringing modern management techniques to the Pentagon's sacred fiefdoms represented a revolution, and, like all revolutionaries, McNamara made many enemies, especially in the uniformed services, who saw their private domains threatened by his drive toward increased efficiency and centralized management. Almost to a man, they were delighted to see him go.

In reforming the Pentagon, McNamara's talents had served him well. But in the prosecution of the war they had sometimes failed him. Vietnam was not a management problem, it was a war, and war is about life and death—filled with intangibles beyond analysis—and perhaps he did not fully grasp its stupid waste and its irrational emotions, and the elusiveness of facts and truth when men are dying. Nor did he truly understand the political roots of the conflict until it was too late. He had tried to master the war as he had mastered everything else in his remarkable career, using pure intellect and his towering analytical skills. But Vietnam defied analysis. In the end, this man, who was probably our greatest Secretary of Defense, was not well suited for managing a war—yet that was what was required by the circumstances.

Under his controlled exterior, Bob McNamara suffered as much as any man I have ever known. I cannot think of what he went through without feeling an intense sadness—for his pain, for his sincerity and commitment, for the dreadful cost in lives and national treasure of the policies that he and his colleagues followed for too long. From late 1965 until the end of 1967, I myself, after opposing them at the outset, had supported those policies as a private citizen and a personal adviser to the President. I was about to discover how wrong I had been.

—CLARK CLIFFORD
WITH RICHARD HOLBROOKE

(*This is the first part of a three-part article.*)

THE THEATRE

Back Then

THE Black Eagles of Leslie Lee's "Black Eagles," at the Manhattan Theatre Club, are the Tuskegee Airmen—fliers who were trained at the college for service in the Second World War. The play begins in Washington in 1989 at a reception that the airmen give for General Colin Powell, and from there we go back to Italy in 1944 and the men's barracks. "Black Eagles" is a memory play, impressionistically written; much of it is humorous, but the pressure of emotion underneath gives it strength. One of the first of the soldiers we meet, near the beginning, is Roscoe (played by Damien Leake), a ventriloquist who is able to unload a number of grievances in conversations with his dummy, Julius. (Mr. Leake also composed special theme music for Julius. Is there no limit to his talent?) There are scenes in the studio of a beautiful young sculptress (Illeana Douglas) who has fallen in love with an airman called Buddy (Reggie Montgomery); there is a sudden spurt of dancing; David Rainey, as Leon, quotes a poem by Langston Hughes. And so forth. In a seemingly random fashion, a powerful story is being told. When the Tuskegee Airmen arrive in Italy, their duties are confined to escorting bombers manned by white fliers—a source of much suppressed resentment. Then, right before Anzio, they are switched to fighter duty, and morale rises to ecstasy as the men bring back news of their "kills." (Mr. Lee is in perfect tune with the temper of those times.) At one point, to celebrate, the fliers brush aside their beer bottles, break out a bottle of cognac, and pass it around as a loving cup. Sometime later, there is a call for silence, and one of them (Raymond Anthony Thomas) produces an elaborate tin box, opens it, and holds aloft a bottle of Coca-Cola: it instantly becomes a sacred object for them (and for us). The play ends, as it began, in 1989. Three gray-haired fliers (Lawrence James, Robinson Frank Adu, and Graham Brown), whom we met at the start, are men whose younger selves we have come to know during the evening. Mr. Brown and his younger self (Mr. Rainey) end the play reciting a poem together by Leslie Lee of a quality to match Hughes'.

"Black Eagles" is an absorbing play, and the acting throughout is adept enough to persuade us that it is flawless. The actors I haven't mentioned, just as good as those I have, are Scott Whitehurst and Brian Evaret Chandler, as Eagles; Michael Barry Greer, as the general who gives the unpopular escort order and then reverses it; and Larry Green and Milton Elliott, as a pair of white fliers who are determined to breach the color line and do so, with some awkwardness. Sets by Charles McClennahan, costumes by Beth A. Ribblett, lighting by Natasha Katz. The show was conceived and directed by Ricardo Khan.

IN "The Good Times Are Killing Me," Lynda Barry has created, hands down, the most enchanting heroine of the Off Broadway season; her name is Edna Arkins, and the play is about the friendship of this little white girl, beautifully portrayed by Angela Goethals, and a little black girl named Bonna, beautifully portrayed by Chandra Wilson. They live side by side in a working-class neighborhood that started out white and is rapidly becoming racially mixed, and Miss Barry, a cartoonist for the *Village Voice*, has composed their story in words and whatever popular tunes seem appropriate. Quite a few do. The play, which opened recently at Second Stage, is, like "Black Eagles," told in flashbacks. Edna, the narrator, comes out, arms raised, singing "The hills are alive with the sound of music," and we're off. The moment she sets eyes on Bonna, she is determined that they will be best friends. Though Bonna is a bit wary at first, and so are both mothers, Edna succeeds, almost to the end. The times are mostly good, but there is sadness, too: Edna's father deserts the family; Bonna's little brother is drowned. Even so, spirits remain high. Edna's foolish, embarrassing aunt invites Bonna on a family camping trip. (The aunt, by the way, leaves no doubt that Miss Barry is a cartoonist; as played by Ruth Williamson, she is right out of the funny papers.) Bonna's parents take Edna with them to church, and open her eyes and ears to glory. Edna and her put-upon little sister, Lucy (Lauren Gaffney, another beauty), acquire a record-player and, draping their basement in 45-r.p.m. records, open a night club there. Everybody welcome. There is marvellous dancing by a tough guy from the neighborhood, whom Bonna keeps under her thumb; he is played by John Lathan, who doubles as the black preacher at church. Doubling and tripling abound. So do shenanigans, but beneath the shenanigans and other action there is a solemn current of comment on race relations, which rises to the surface when Edna and Bonna enter seventh grade, and makes for an unwarranted down ending. Unwarranted, I think, because Miss Barry brings us no real news of black and white, and accomplishes more when she is funny than when she is serious. In comedy, her touch is sure. My favorite moment comes when Edna carelessly slips an arm around Lucy's shoulders.

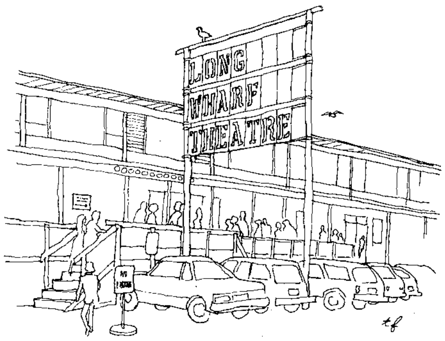
LUCY: Do you like me?

EDNA: No.

Perfection is rare in the theatre, and should be cherished.

Mark Brokaw, who directed the play and kept it clear and on the move, has assembled a splendid cast. I especially admired Kim Staunton and Wendell Pierce, as Bonna's parents; Brandon Mayo, as her little brother; and Holly Felton, as Edna's mother. Rusty Smith's fine settings were lighted by Don Holder, and the costumes were designed by Ellen McCartney.

—EDITH OLIVER



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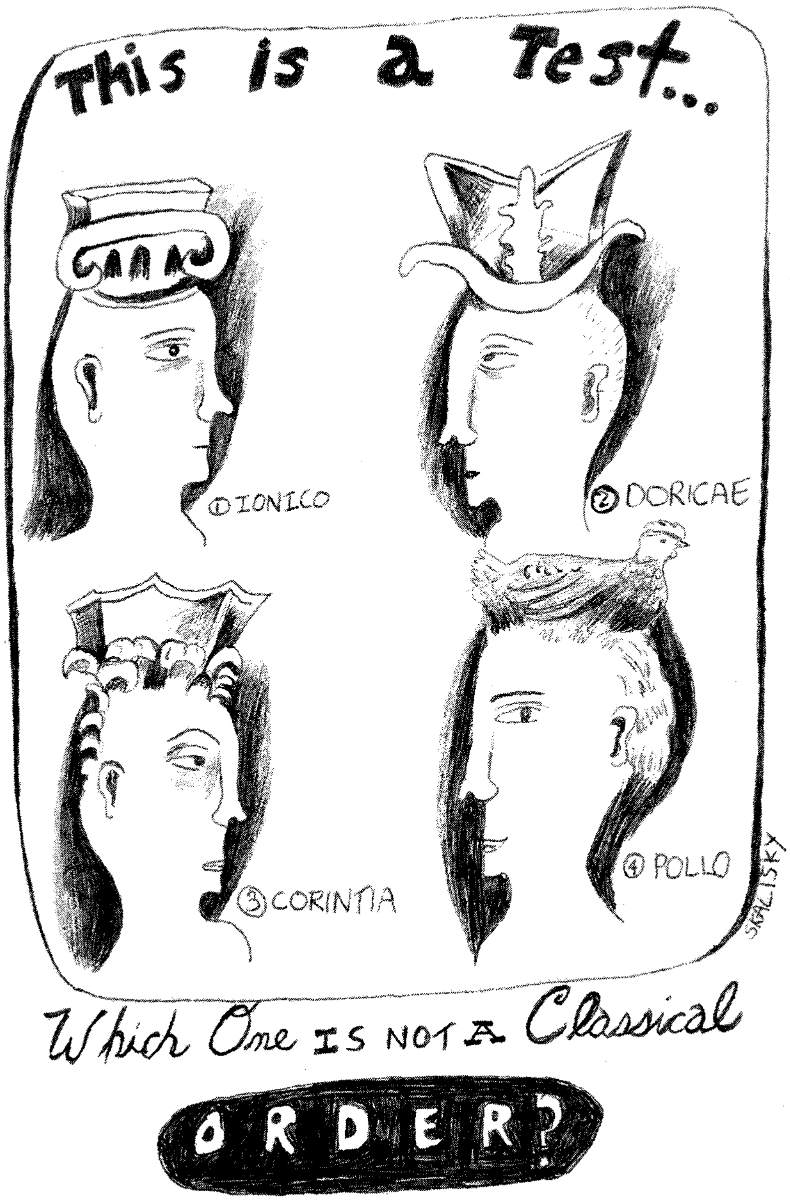
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Romantic

THE heroine of "Truly, Madly, Deeply" is a young woman named Nina (Juliet Stevenson), who lives by herself in a large, cluttered, rat-infested flat in North London. She's obsessed with the memory of her lover, Jamie, who died suddenly and freakishly. When she's alone, she hears him speaking to her; she feels as if he were following her home from the tube station, protecting her as she walks the dark streets, and she has soothing little domestic chats with him before she goes to bed. She guards her solitude jealously, because she doesn't want to lose Jamie's voice: it's all she cares about. Her grief has taken the form of fantasy, a refusal to accept that her life has changed; the voice Nina hears is like phantom pain from an amputated limb. The first half hour or so of this picture shows us a woman who isn't really connecting with her everyday life, who moves through it without seeming to be a part of it. She's pleasant with her neighbors and relatives and co-workers, and doesn't mope ostentatiously, but we can sense how difficult it is for her to interact with them, how disengaged she feels; when she's with other people, she looks alien, slightly artificial, as if her presence among them were just some sort of photographic trick, an optical effect done in the lab. In these early scenes, Anthony Minghella, directing his own screenplay, establishes an unusual, delicately varied mood. He does justice both to the numbness of Nina's emotional life and to the squalor of her material circumstances (everything in her flat is falling apart, and the rats seem determined to crowd her out), but the movie isn't oppressive or claustrophobic. We understand that Nina doesn't *want* to be miserable; it's just something that has happened to her, and she can't yet see a way out of it. We know that we're seeing a fundamentally sane, happy woman who's going through a very rough patch in her life.



These opening scenes have a fluid, gentle realism, a vivid sense of the textures of ordinary life, and it would be possible, I suppose, to mistake this picture, a BBC production, for one of those tastefully boring English domestic dramas, full of tiny, familiar emotions and whispered truisms about middle-class anguish. But Minghella's realism is more ambitious and more thorough than that; it's not just surface verisimilitude. In "Truly, Madly, Deeply," the lovingly rendered details of the heroine's life always seem to point beyond themselves. There's an emotional unity to everything we see, a sense that even within the circumscribed world of Nina's flat, and even within the cocoon of reminiscence she has spun around herself, nothing has a fixed, immutable meaning—that her relationship to her most cherished objects and memories is subject to change. Although Nina is trying to hide from life, to remain suspended in the happier past, the world keeps breaking in on her, suggesting other possibilities. Minghella surrounds her with people who are coping, in various ways, with the small shocks of day-to-day existence and their own feelings of strangeness in the world: a Polish handyman (Christopher Rózycki), who misses his country and thinks he's in love with Nina; her boss, Sandy (the marvellous Bill Paterson), a linguist who's separated from his Spanish-speaking wife and can't read his son's postcards, because they're written in her language, which Sandy has never bothered to learn; a Chilean exile (Stella Maris), who was a filmmaker in her native country and now takes cleaning jobs to support herself; an elderly, widowed exterminator (David Ryall), who confesses that he still has conversations with his dead wife. Every one of these characters expands the context in which we see Nina's emotional state, casts a different sort of light on the dishevelled furnishings of her life.

This shifting, unpredictable play of light allows Minghella to move gracefully from a realistic mode into a fantastic one. One night, Nina sits down at the piano and begins to play a Bach piece, and she's so transported by the music that she imagines she's hearing the cello part that Jamie used to play; she smiles, and the camera pans across the darkened room to reveal her dead lover, in the flesh, behind her. For the rest of the picture, Jamie (Alan Rickman) pops in and out of her flat, a ghost with a body, and his presence seems perfectly natural to us: he has emerged from a setting that is already charged with Nina's feelings for him. He's the embodiment, the literal manifestation, of the fantasy that she has taken refuge in since his death. And he's all too literal. After her initial euphoria at having him back, Nina's relation to him begins to change: she's forced to confront, in the most concrete way, what it would really mean to live the rest of her life with a dead guy as her significant other. By reappearing and reinserting himself in the irritating specificity of the everyday, the ordinary business of living, Jamie becomes just another possibility, another eccentric perspective on the world: reincarnated and constantly underfoot, he's something that Nina can at last start to distance herself from.

Nina and Jamie's estrangement is, like everything else in this movie, a gradual process, an unobtrusive accumulation of details and stray moments. The transformation in the heroine's relationship with her lover sneaks up on her, and on the audience, because it's achieved largely by means of a kind of weird domestic comedy. Jamie gets on Nina's nerves in the trivial ways that anyone who lives with anyone else does: he turns the heat up too high, because he's afraid of catching a cold; he interrupts her while she's taking a bath; he invites friends over without telling her, and she finds her living room filled with extremely pale men who watch videos far into the night. (Jamie's buddies from the afterlife are a hilarious group. They huddle intently around the television and mouth the dialogue of old favorites like "Brief Encounter." They all seem to have gone straight to Heaven from the Everyman repertory cinema in Hampstead.) She still loves him, but his presence in her ordinary life soon loses its miraculous character: her fantasy becomes, in a sense, mundane, domesticated—something to *deal* with, as if it were one of those alarming surprises her flat keeps springing on her. With Jamie around, Nina recognizes, with inescapable force, the hermetic, stifling quality of her recent existence; she begins to feel the need to let some light and air in again, to reënter the disorder of reality.

This lovely, original comedy is the first film directed by Minghella, who is known in England as a writer of plays for radio, television, and the stage. "Truly, Madly, Deeply" is the work of a mature artist, one with the skill to draw us into a fresh and startlingly humane vision of modern urban life. Minghella writes dialogue that sounds casual but somehow takes us straight to the heart of his work's larger concerns, and he directs the actors beautifully. Rickman (the suave villain of the first "Die Hard" picture) is unexpectedly romantic here, and very funny besides. And Juliet Stevenson, who has worked with Minghella many times, gives a remarkable performance in an extremely demanding role. Nina could easily have been a drab, exasperating character—by virtue of either her unvarying grief or her basic liberal decency—but Stevenson makes her glow. She doesn't have a false moment, or a boring one, in the whole picture. Together, she and Minghella embody the movie's spirit of transformation: by giving each other room, and remaining alert both to each other and to the changing surfaces of the world, they seem to have discovered a new set of possibilities for movie realism.

James Lapine's "Impromptu" is an ebullient and absurdly entertaining account of the famous love affair of Frédéric Chopin and George Sand, the French woman novelist who made herself notorious by dressing in men's clothing. The script, by Sarah Kernochan (who is Lapine's wife), isn't terribly scrupulous about historical accuracy: it makes Sand's wooing and winning of frail, chaste young Chopin into a busy exercise in farce, with a full complement of deceptions and setbacks and misunderstandings—few of which, as far as I can tell, have any basis in fact. Celebrities of the Romantic movement—Delacroix, Musset, and Liszt among them—are put through their paces, along with George and Frédéric, in the salons and

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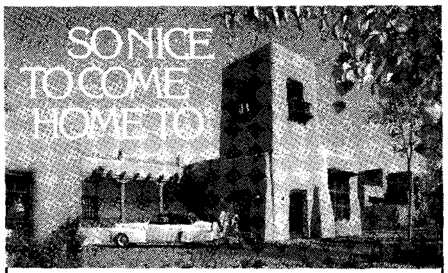

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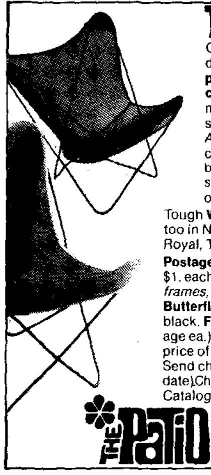

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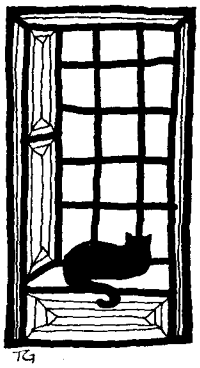
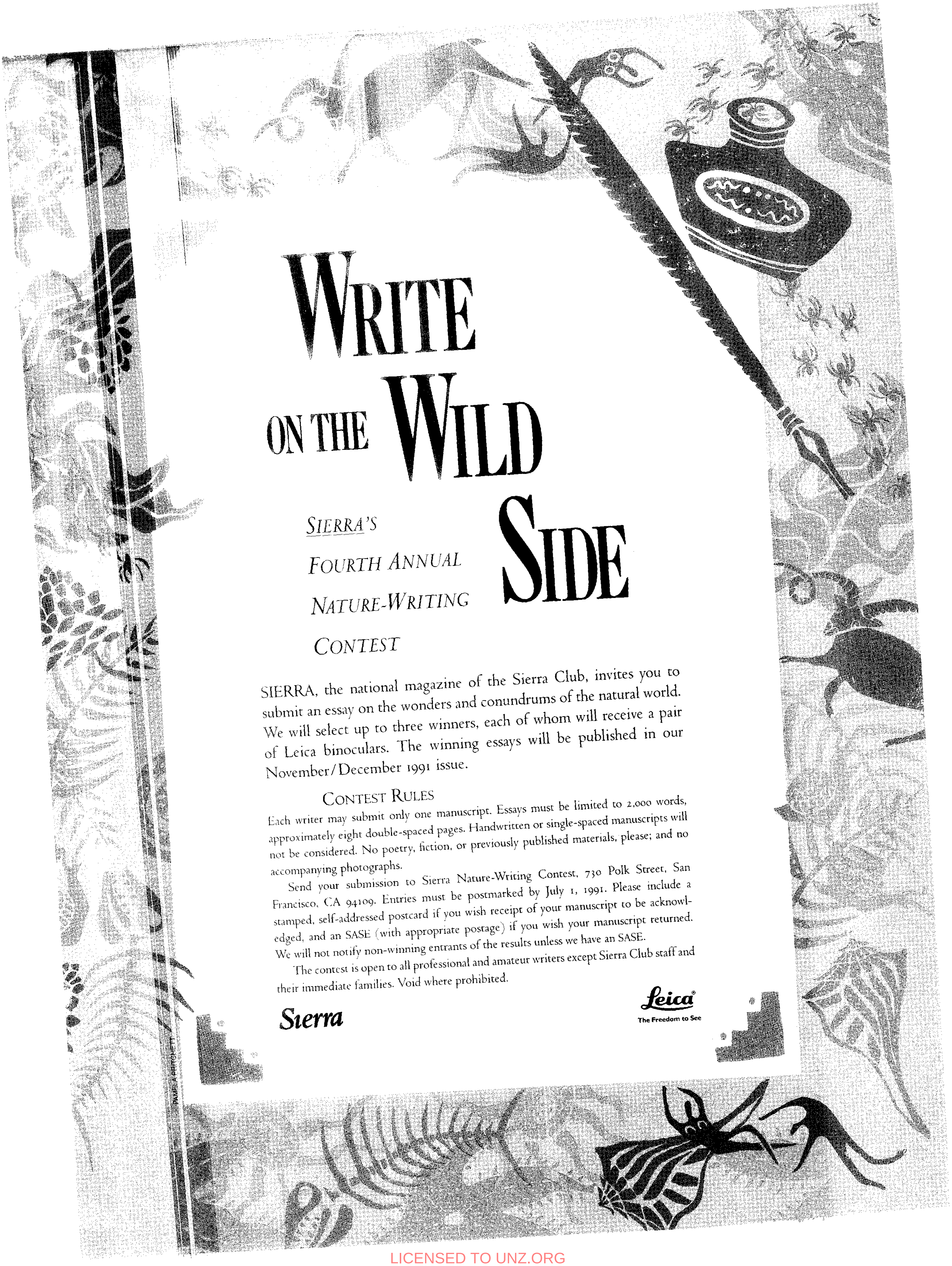
ballrooms and country houses of eighteen-thirties France; they issue florid declarations of love, hurl barbed epigrams at their rivals, challenge each other to duels, and, over all, make complete asses of themselves in their pursuit of the sublime. They're lively company. And, for all its frivolity and whole-cloth embellishment, "Impromptu" seems truer to its subjects than the movies' previous treatment of this story, an insane 1944 Hollywood biopic called "A Song to Remember." That movie, directed by Charles Vidor, gave us Cornel Wilde as a doltishly naïve Chopin allowing himself to be the kept man of Merle Oberon's evil George Sand—Vampira in pants. She forces him to stay at home and compose silly études and nocturnes rather than the polonaises that, in the picture's bizarre ideology, represent his better self, as a man of the people and a foe of czarist oppression. She alienates him from his kindly old teacher (Paul Muni at his most unbearable), and even tries to prevent him from giving a series of concerts to benefit the Polish freedom fighters; despite his poor health, he defies her, though, and, in the movie's climactic sequence, leaves a trail of clammy sweat and bloody sputum through the great concert halls of Europe as he plays polonaises for his people. (The historical record does not provide a lot of support for this version of events.)

"Impromptu" is refreshingly free of high-minded impulses. It's content, for the most part, to show us the peculiar spectacle of nineteenth-century bohemians at play, and it's shamelessly eager to please. Kernochan's script embroiders the Chopin-Sand love story with motifs lifted from other tales of romantic intrigue, such as "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" and Jean Renoir's "The Rules of the Game," for no better (or worse) reason than to keep the characters in constant furious motion. (There's a sly joke in her borrowing from Renoir's film. She gathers her Romantic all-stars in an opulent country house, where they give amorous chase to one another, in various combinations, and at the climax of this long sequence they put on a show for their aristocratic hosts; the author and star of their little performance piece is Musset—whose play "Les Caprices de Marianne" was the primary source of "The Rules of the Game.") Lapine directs with broad theatrical flair: he wants every scene to be a showstopper, and he's not above throwing in some slapstick to perk things up. And the actors look as if they were having a wonderful time charging around in their elaborate costumes. Bernadette Peters, as Liszt's mistress, and Mandy Patinkin, as Musset, are especially uninhibited, and Emma Thompson, as the art-groupie duchess who presides over the bohemians' country revels, does some expert high-style mugging; there's a different sort of wit in Julian Sand's gaunt, fierce-looking Liszt.



The historical figures we see in "Impromptu" are cartoons, but they're cartoons with recognizable human qualities; their selfishness and jealousy and unscrupulousness are so exaggerated that the bad traits become rather endearing, like Daffy Duck's vanity or Wile E. Coyote's deviousness. Hugh Grant's Chopin is a brilliant caricature of the Romantic ideal of the artist. Grant, who is as beautiful as a cherub, gives his character an air of befuddled unworldliness, and he punctuates his readings with delicately timed tubercular coughs. He plays Chopin as a besieged virgin, outraged by social impropriety and terrified of physical love; Sand's advances make him tremble and shiver, as if he were being exposed to a nasty draft. And Sand, as Judy Davis plays her, has a personality that would make stronger men than Chopin run for cover. This is a great role, and Davis, a prodigiously talented actress, attacks it ferociously; she blows through the picture like a strong wind, levelling everything in her path. Sand's passion for Chopin is the sort of ardor that makes people ridiculous, and Davis makes Sand's absurdities both funny and tremendously moving; this woman's willingness to embarrass herself seems a kind of romantic heroism. The ultimate surprise of "Impromptu" is how satisfying it is as a celebration of romantic (and Romantic) love. By the end of the picture, Sand, with her swaggering aggressiveness, and Chopin, with his maidenly modesty, look like a match made in Heaven.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY



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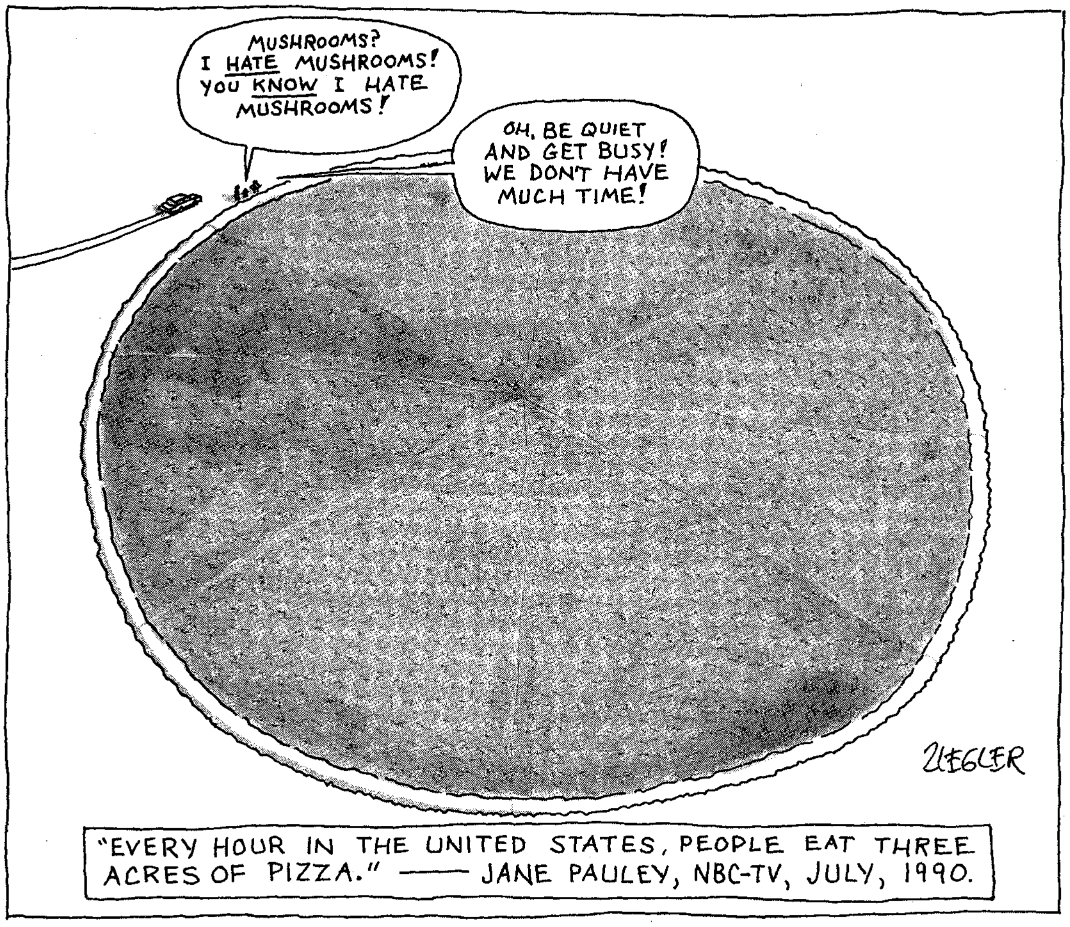
Let's Pretend

HOW many artists have passed through the world without being noticed? How many got a flash of attention, and that was it? Over and over, we hear about the same artists, but what about all the others—the unknown, uncelebrated ones, who far outnumber those whose work has stayed visible and valued? Among the uncelebrated ones, how many never had a chance, just because luck wasn't with them—because they weren't in the right place at the right moment, or they weren't the "right" sex or the "right" race? You don't have to be hyperconscious of cultural biases to realize that art history can involve more than judgments about the good, the bad, and the ugly.

The notion that art speaks for itself is appealing but unrealistic. To get into circulation and to achieve some kind of status, art needs believers, defenders, interpreters, dealers, collectors, and museums. If an artist lacks such support, he or she has one basic hope: that sometime in the future the work will be recognized and honored. For that to happen, though, it has to survive. There is no guaranteed system of protection for art. Anything can affect its fate. Age, say, can destroy it. It can be in a city that is bombed, it can be in a house that is burned. The vicissitudes of taste can come into play, and art that was once treasured can be abandoned. It can be de-acquisitioned by a museum, or it can be put into storage and become as good as lost. But disappearing for a while can also serve art well; being ignored can be a form of accidental preservation until its time has come. That is what happened to the photography of Clementina, Lady Hawarden.

Hawarden's entire body of work was made in eight years, from 1857 to 1865, when she died, at the age of forty-two. Soon after her death, except for a few photographs that she herself had sold or given to friends and that eventually ended up in private and public collections, her work was out of public sight. Her photography turned into a secret because almost all of it was passed down within her family. But even after Hawarden's granddaughter Lady Clementina Tottenham gave the family pictures to London's Victoria and Albert Museum, in 1939, the work remained in obscurity. This gift was a windfall, but by then no one remembered Hawarden, and there was no demand for what she had accomplished. Back in the eighteen-sixties, for a season or two, her prints had been singled out when they appeared in group exhibitions, winning her compliments and silver medals, but in 1939 she had been dead for almost seventy-five years, and her reputation had been buried with her. The photographs were stashed away.

People compare museums to shrines, and that comparison seems appropriate for the rooms one usually gets to see. Behind the scenes, though, many museums are more like a crowded attic; there's usually an accretion of stuff, some of it valuable, some of it junk. These unfeatured objects have an especially touching aura. It's as if they were waiting in the wings, ready understudies. Will they get a chance to appear? Sometimes the big break happens, as with Hawarden. Fifty years after her photographs got to the V. & A., a group of them was selected for an exhibition there—the first all-Hawarden show ever. Now, that's what one calls waiting for recognition.


MUSHROOMS? I HATE MUSHROOMS! YOU KNOW I HATE MUSHROOMS!
OH, BE QUIET AND GET BUSY! WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME!
ZIEGLER

"EVERY HOUR IN THE UNITED STATES, PEOPLE EAT THREE ACRES OF PIZZA." —— JANE PAULEY, NBC-TV, JULY, 1990.

Being sequestered as private property and then landing in museum storage are only two of the reasons that Hawarden's photography was almost lost to history. Another factor was a lack of interest in her *kind* of work, which must be why the museum shelved her photographs in the first place. Mostly, Hawarden took photographs of her daughters in fancy dress. Perhaps if she'd used famous people as her models the interest in her work would have been greater, but she didn't; hers are family photographs, a genre that has historically been thought unworthy of serious attention. Nevertheless, they're wonderful. And they were born of one of the few things in life in which women have traditionally been granted more opportunity for self-expression than men—dressing up.

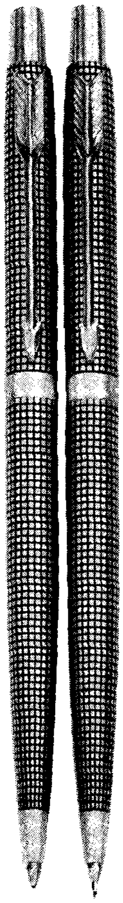
When Mark Haworth-Booth, curator of photography at the V. & A., assigned a graduate student, Virginia Dodier, to go through the museum's Hawarden material, she had an art historian's dream job. Almost nothing was known about the eight hundred or so Hawarden pictures, or the woman who took them. It was Dodier's detective work that eventually led to a catalogue raisonné and to Lady Hawarden's first exhibition, which then travelled in smaller versions to the Musée d'Orsay, in Paris; the Museum of Modern Art, in New York; and, finally, the J. Paul Getty Museum, in Malibu. It's unlikely that the pictures will soon be let out on the road again: the darkness that enveloped them all those years turns out to have been healthy in terms of their physical protection. Like most photographs made in the early days, they don't like light.

At first, Hawarden's photographs are shocks, and for a number of reasons. Not only do they seem otherworldly in their beauty but they are peopled almost exclusively by women. (You can find men in her work, but their roles are minor—they function merely as tokens of the life that surrounded these flights of fancy.) One is not used to such subliminally charged pictures, and certainly not ones that cross back and forth between purity and sensuality as these do. Nor does one usually see at exhibitions photographs whose corners and edges have been dramatically torn, giving them idiosyncratic shapes. (This occurred when they were ripped out of the family albums in which they once sat—apparently before they got to the Victoria and Albert.) The baroque shapes add to the works' mystery, by reinforcing their similarity to pieces of a puzzle. With their cuttlefish hues, their feeling of age, and their deformed state, many of the photographs appear so fragile that they seem to float, and their content enhances their sense of weightlessness. There's something dreamily luxurious about them. And, like dreams, they're imbued with a mysterious sexuality.

Hawarden's body of work simply couldn't have happened if everyone hadn't put in long hours. Since her daughters were her models, one wonders what she would do today. Would the girls sit endlessly for her, as they did then? Would they be willing to put on all that cumbersome fancy dress? Or would they be out and about in London—at university, at jobs, watching "Twin Peaks"? If the girls should prove too busy for her, there is someone in New York she could call on who would understand her: Cindy Sherman.

NO exhibition has yet been mounted at which we could view photographs by Lady Hawarden and Cindy Sherman side by side, but both of them have several images reproduced in a recent book by Constance Sullivan, "Women Photographers," published by Abrams. Sherman provides the final image, one of the ugliest photographs ever made. Bugs crawl through a tacky, knotted-up pinky-blond wig that all but covers Sherman's face—strangles it, really. One eye is visible. You could say that that eye is patriotic—it's red, white, and blue. (The eyeball is blue, and it would take a six-pack of Visine to clear up the surrounding redness.) Sherman's nutty self-portrait is at the opposite pole from Hawarden's work when it comes to aesthetics; Sherman has indulged herself in an orgy of aggression against beauty and self-control, while Hawarden's portraits eagerly accommodate Victorian society's expectations of how women should look. Hawarden's and Sherman's portraits in "Women Photographers" beg for comparison: they're like images you find in "before" and "after" narratives—in this case, the narrative of women before and after they publicly took the matter of their lives into their own hands. However, the fact that Hawarden and Sherman appear to be opposites is not what makes them an interesting couple. Cindy Sherman and Clementina, Lady Hawarden—two women whose names sound as different as a ringing telephone and a church chime, and whose pictures have equally contrasting contexts—are soul sisters separated by more than a century. There's a tie between their photographs which connects them as surely as an umbilical cord.

With these two, what you're looking at is home entertainment that doesn't require stereos, TVs, or prepackaged games. Both artists are involved in building fantasies, and that does require other players, though, or at least the illusion of other players. Hawarden



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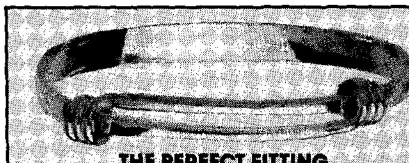

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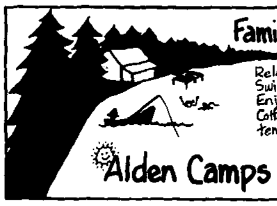

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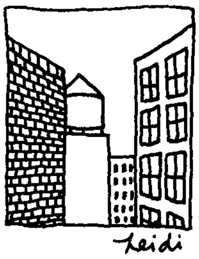
found her stars in her own house; her daughters were not only her leading ladies but occasionally her Romeos, too. There's no family nucleus in Sherman's imagery. The stamp of a Sherman, so far, has been that she is her own model—her own woman, man, et cetera. (You can't always count on finding Sherman in her photographs nowadays, but her absences are a relatively new development in a fourteen-year career.) The references and the vocabularies of Hawarden and Sherman are clearly products of different eras. For instance, painting, literature, and a sense of faraway places inform Hawarden's work; the movies and magazines are what inspired Sherman's first tableaux, and later, when she moved on to spoof painting, her photographic twists on art history were decidedly contemporary. But, again, these differences are less interesting than what the two women have in common.



Hundreds and hundreds of photographs prove how central to their art dressing up and pretending have been. Just an atmospheric setting, an assortment of outfits, and a camera: that's all these two artists need. Of course, there's something else they bring—imagination. Hawarden and Sherman are examples of giving in to fantasy wholeheartedly. And not only for the sake of art. It's public knowledge that Sherman started dressing herself up as someone else before she began doing it for her pictures—that she continued this typical childhood game into adulthood. In an interview that appeared last year in *W* she explained, "I guess whenever I would get moody or depressed, I would spend a couple of hours turning myself into somebody else with makeup or clothes. . . . It was a cathartic thing that I needed to do. In Buffalo"—she went to college there—"when I would go and watch TV with people, I'd be dressed up like Lucille Ball. Or there'd be an opening, and I'd go as a pregnant woman or something."

People who have seen Sherman's wild pictures seem to be surprised when they meet her for the first time. "But she's the girl-next-door type," they say. Well, who but someone who's been there could conjure up what Sherman does with such authority? In the *W* interview she provides another memory—one that qualifies as a collective refrain, it's so widely shared: "I could remember putting on a girdle, putting myself through torture at 13, when I certainly didn't need a girdle, because I thought, 'This is what beauty is.' . . . I can remember waking up before going to school and spending 45 minutes putting on makeup because you never know who might be at the door—Mr. Right might be there—remember him?"

Over the years, Sherman's technique has grown highly sophisticated, but there's something especially compelling about her earlier, rougher work. You can see a mass of it in "Untitled Film Stills," which Rizzoli published last October. The book reproduces forty of more than eighty eight-by-ten-inch photographs that Sherman made between 1977 and 1980. The photographs have the look of movie publicity stills, hence their title. Talk about striking oil quickly! At this experimental stage of her career, Sherman found her voice as an artist, precisely because she didn't try anything fancy; she simply started recording what she was already up to—getting dressed up as somebody else—and that's why this work is so authentic and convincing. Much of what has followed is technically cleverer and visually richer, but these earlier images have something particularly magnetic about them. The pictures are so spontaneous that it's almost as if she were fooling around with a friend, not making art with a capital "A." Her approach to the medium is still amateur, which gives these pictures the sense of freedom that can occur when people do things they think nobody's paying any attention to.

When Sherman made the "Untitled Film Stills," she had no money to speak of. During part of that time, she supported herself by working as a receptionist at Artists Space, one of many "alternative spaces" created in the seventies by groups of artists who felt that museums and commercial galleries weren't responsive enough to what was happening in contemporary art. Sherman didn't always show up for work looking as one might expect her to. Not that a receptionist has a particular outfit, but unless you're in a doctor's or a dentist's office you usually don't find the person at the front desk in a nurse's uniform—clothing that Sherman once wore to the job, we are informed in Arthur Danto's introduction to the Rizzoli book. Danto correctly links Sherman's cameos to the performance art that was burgeoning then, but the odds are that she would have got herself up in nurse drag all on her own.

Sherman's stills are generic more than specific; mostly, they recall images of women which one might find in movies or magazines of the fifties and sixties. Since the stills were made before the fashions of those years came back into vogue, her out-of-date wardrobe was cheap. She could find plenty of outfits and props in thrift shops and flea markets, and her ingenuity is a lesson in making something on a small budget. Again and again, her imagination saved the day. Beyond her visual resolutions, there's her talent as a chameleon. Whether or not Sherman's skills at role-playing would translate onto the stage or the screen I don't know, but in her own photography she's a real Sarah Bernhardt. She plays sex kitten, ingénue, anxious lover, fallen woman, gal-about-town, victim, vixen, virgin, lonely girl, rich girl, the girl everyone wants—all right in key. Her settings and costumes have a genuine B-movie touch.

The shot that always gets to me is one that might have fallen out of "Bus Stop." In it, Sherman stands on a country road, her back to the viewer. She has put on a ponytailed platinum wig, a loose white shirt, a checked skirt, white ankle socks, and "girls' sneakers." A suitcase is on the ground next to her. She's looking up the road, as if waiting for a bus or a car to round the bend. Years ago, interviewing Sherman, I asked her about that photograph. She said that her father had taken it. It had happened when she and her parents were motoring through Arizona, and Sherman, who was sitting in the back seat, noticed that the view they were about to drive into promised a photo opportunity. The family was used to her routine. The car stopped. The trunk was opened. She put on her costume, set up the shot with her suitcase, and then ran into the scene. Her well-trained father snapped the picture. This story tells a lot about Sherman's approach to photography. She isn't bothered that it's a medium anyone can handle. She takes advantage of its mechanical properties: sometimes she's

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had someone else press the button. She's just the type to have appreciated those roadside billboards which used to alert drivers, "Picture Ahead! Kodak as you go."

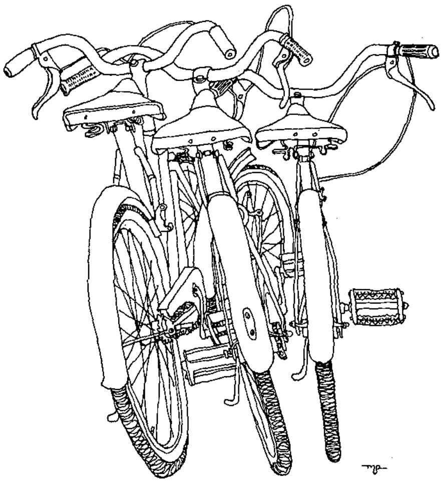
It's more than a decade since Sherman finished the "Untitled Film Stills" series. With time, the images have settled into place as classics, the foundation for all that came after, and, like anything repeated too often, they could have turned into a rut. But Sherman moved on to make all sorts of different images of herself, among them pictures that suggest brutality, and funny images, too, that are full of grotesquerie, foulness, and campiness. Then her over-the-top expressions of hideousness gave way to witty, technically impressive photographic parodies of Renaissance paintings, in which, as usual, she used herself as the model, whether male or female, gross or thin, gorgeous or unappealing. These large-scale pictures are a kind of climax to what she began with the film stills, and from the moment they were shown they were smash hits. Who doesn't want a Renaissance masterpiece in his or her apartment—an au-courant one at that, since Sherman's gender-bending in these works seems to call for the joke that they're really Ms. Pieces?

Right from the start, Sherman has been held up as a paradigm of feminist photography, and as a "postmodern" example of artists who appropriate images already in the world and redo them in a way that somehow throws the spotlight on their meta-meaning in our culture. She has come to embody all this, but I don't believe it's how she began—there's been so much more to her constructions than image deconstruction. At the time she started out, wearing lipstick, heels, and short skirts didn't exactly earn you merit points in the women's-liberation movement. As Sherman herself says, she was self-conscious about how "silly" dressing up was. When you ask her about her work, she's noticeably untheoretical and tentative. Listening to her, you'd think it all came about by accident, but looking at the work itself you can clearly see that it was motivated by pleasure and desire.

GIVEN Sherman's apparent freedom to move in and out of different situations, even different eras, the consistency of time and place that one sees in Lady Hawarden's photographs of her daughters is an obvious point of contrast. The architectural details and the decorative elements in the photographs leave no doubt that the female Hawardens are almost always shown in the same few rooms, and it is the repetition of these environments that gives Hawarden's images their cloistered atmosphere. But that doesn't *mean that these girls didn't go anywhere.* You don't have to leave a place physically to take journeys of the imagination, and that they certainly did, along with their mother and what must have seemed a magical vehicle: her camera. The camera in the late eighteen-fifties was a fashionable recent invention, an exciting addition to a moneyed household. As we can see in Hawarden's work, the camera could transport the already beloved parlor games of the time into a new dimension. The daughters seem so taken up with posing for it that their interest in collaboration must have gone beyond indulging Mama.

Many questions about Lady Hawarden remain unanswered, and since nothing has yet been found that documents what she intended by her pictures it's up to us to make of them what we can. Usually, art-historical information restricts one's interpretations like a leash, and it is easy to forget that such information is often the product of assumptions. With Lady Hawarden, the mystery is out in the open, and one can dive in freely and respond subjectively, stimulated by the minimal yet evocative facts.

She was a Scot who ended up in London, but her mother, Catalina Paulina Alessandro, was Spanish. The Mediterranean background doesn't come through in Hawarden's maiden name, Clementina Elphinstone-Fleeming; it's as Scottish as high tea. Still, you can detect traces of the grandmother's heritage in Hawarden's daughters, and it may have influenced Clementina's un-Victorian sense of elegance. In other ways, she fitted the norm. As was customary for women then, she spent her entire adult life having children. There were ten in all, over a span of eighteen years; the first child was born the year after she got married, the last the year before she died, of pneumonia. Eight lived—seven girls and one boy. Clementina came from money and she married money—Cornwallis Maude, who eventually succeeded to the title Viscount Hawarden. The family's wealth is evident in her pictures: the costumes, the homes, and the bearing of the girls themselves suggest that one is looking at people of some social status.



From the Getty show (which included forty-two prints) it appears that three of Hawarden's daughters—the older girls—were her principal models. There's something intensely rarefied about her presentation of the girls; they're like hothouse prizes. You can't stop being aware of their appearance, or of what they're doing physically. One of Virginia Dodier's captions told us that Clementina, the second daughter, was her mother's favorite subject, but Isabella Grace, the eldest, and Florence Elizabeth, the third, had major roles in this exhibition, too. At the Getty, I regretted the absence of a picture of the much younger Elphinstone Agnes (called Eppy) that had been included in MOMA's show. That photograph is a charmer. Little, and a bit chubby, Eppy has a naughty look. Standing in her bare feet, in her summer dress, she's got to be a kick.

Hawarden's photographs, and her daughters, caught the eye of a fellow amateur photographer, Charles Dodgson, and it's not a surprise. Dodgson expressed his admiration in his diary, and he also bought five Hawarden prints. What with his reputation for being—shall we say?—focussed on young girls, and not just the one he sent down the rabbit hole, one could ascribe his pleasure in the portraits to his own very particular tastes. But many other people take Hawarden's work to be suggestive, especially when they first come upon it without the knowledge that all the girls are her daughters.

This is understandable. Sensuality oozes from many of these pictures.

Hawarden liked to pair her daughters, either by posing them together in tableaux or by using mirrors, which gave her an intimate double image, and some of these scenes are ripe for being taken as erotically charged love scenes. They may well be; it was the Victorian age, after all—a puritanical time that produced a lot of titillating imagery, and on the whole the girls themselves were at an age where everything's primed for falling in love. But ultimately Hawarden's pictures are about moods and thoughts; and who knows who, or what, was actually going through the minds of the girls? Many of the photographs thrive on a sense of ambiguity; drive them too hard to conclusions or interpretations and they lose their lovely state of suspension. Hawarden didn't title her pictures, perhaps because she and the family knew what each one was about, or perhaps because she intended the mystery—the pictures were taken while the family was playing games of make-believe. At any rate, when she displayed her photographs at public events—such as one Dodgson referred to in his diary as a "bazaar for the benefit of Female Artists"—she listed them as "Studies from Life" and "Photographic Studies." This was a typical way of establishing that the photographs were to be considered as art.

The Getty title for the Hawarden exhibition was "Domestic Idylls," and that suits the content of Hawarden's imagery. You can visualize how it all came about. Together much of the day, the mother and the daughters found a never-ending source of amusement—each other. And they had material that would never run dry: their lives, their favorite stories, beloved characters, exquisite dresses to put on and dream in—costumes that could transport them to other times, other cultures, other narratives. For example, at the Getty one could see Clementina acting a Biblical part, or one could find her as a male figure, in breeches, down on the proverbial knee, at her sister Isabella's side. There were instances of the Hawardens' use of Oriental costumes and peasant dress, and obvious nods to the fad of the day, Pre-Raphaelite painting. And there were homages to that heroine of heroines for the Scots, their Queen Mary. But ultimately these more illustrational pictures aren't as mesmerizing as Hawarden's simplest photographs—her shots of the girls at

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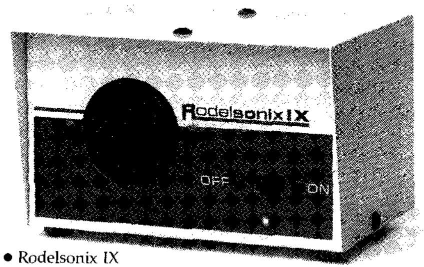

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dressing tables or looking out of windows.

It's lucky that Hawarden's themes lent themselves to all that head-drooping and holding onto drapery, walls, mirrors, and windows—between the dressing and the posing, the girls must have been exhausted. And Mother had to do far more than "press the button." It's evident from her angles (and, one supposes, her choreography of the girls) what a grand compensator Hawarden was in terms of solving the difficulties of her medium—for example, the strain on a human being who had to hold still for as long as the camera required. And it's clear from her solutions concerning light—most obviously in the pictures that involve mirrors and windows—what a grasp she had of the problems that characterized photography then. The mirrors and windows had more than one function: they were technical as well as narrative devices. This is decades before flash; natural light was obligatory.

Hawarden's most original decisions may be harder to discern than her technical control, because they're about what she didn't do. She didn't jam her images with all the material stuff that was such a feature of Victorian decoration and fills typical photographs of the era. Maybe it was the Scot in her that kept things so sparse; maybe her appreciation of empty space came from the Mediterranean influence of her mother, or from a trip she made to Rome. (That she made such a trip is one of the few things we know about her besides her marriage, children, and death.) In any case, this aesthetic led her to place her models in near-empty settings, thereby filling the pictures with atmosphere, emotion, and the excitement of stories instead of with possessions. There's something very modern about it all. Hawarden was a Victorian Minimalist. Often her pictures are set against simple backdrops—a piece of fabric, say, or a wall (sometimes wallpapered with stars)—and they include only the odd chair, table, dressing table, mirror. Other photographers of her time didn't go in this less-is-more direction, and their photographs are much less poetic than Hawarden's. Her use of curtains alone is enough to put you in a romantic mood.

She was also a marvellous balancer, capturing with breathtaking grace the sweep of pattern, the folds and fall of cloth, the shimmers and shafts of light, the meetings of planes and of gestures and of eyes. There isn't a lick of pretentiousness in her compositions. You can sense the delight she took in her work from a photograph that is all about the challenge of balance and the joy of the leap. It's a shot of a stylishly clipped poodle balancing with forepaws on one chairback and hind paws on another—an acrobatic stunt that must have taken great timing on the part of all involved, and probably much practice. When the picture worked, it must surely have had everyone clapping.

Who knows what involvement Lord Hawarden had in his wife's work? According to the biography that accompanied the show at the Getty, they had been married for twelve years when she took her first pictures—in 1857, at Dundrum, the family estate in County Tipperary, Ireland, which he had inherited the year before. How she got her first camera is unknown. According to various articles by Dodier, Hawarden began with a stereoscopic camera, which was all the vogue then. It was a machine particularly conducive to taking landscape views, to capturing the breadth and bounty of nature—all of which the Hawardens had in abundance at Dundrum. "Domestic Idylls" did not include examples of Hawarden's stereoscopic pictures, but there were a couple of albumen prints in which Lord Hawarden is seen, together with one or more of his daughters.

So her husband definitely joined in on occasion—a fact that's also apparent in the only book on Hawarden. (This book, titled "Clementina, Lady Hawarden," was published by Academy Editions/St. Martin's in 1974, and it remained as much of a specialized secret as its subject. With good reason: it is a reminder of how bad printing can be. The reproductions are like coffee when it's mud at the bottom of your cup. The curlicue edges of the prints have been cropped, and the cropping kills the poetry of what happened to them. A short, unsigned introduction feels as if it had too many words in it, although, reading it, I felt starved for information.) However, when the basic cast of players gets diluted, when the father or servants or friends appear, the pictures lose that sense of locked-away, carried-away concentration which makes Lady Hawarden's photography so special. Her most unforgettable images are like views you might spy through a keyhole.

Although these photographs rank, in their way, with the great, rich painted depictions of interiors of rooms, it is their power to induce understanding of another kind of interior that makes you fall under the spell of their magic: the interior lives of the girls. These cocoonlike photographs, formed of light and of silks and laces and other fabrics from a dressing-up box, and starring women grownup enough to look like women but not yet old enough to leave home, have at their core the promise of a narrative that sucks you in the way certain novels do which are dedicated to the souls of their characters. Your imagination can have a field day with the narrative's construction and its unravelling, for, while the Hawardens must have had their own goals for each of the pictures, a hundred and thirty years after they were taken the images have the subjective possibilities of Rorschach blots. Yet they're also grounded by place, period, and relationships; these are not strangers but sisters, whose photographer wasn't just any photographer but their mother.

Hawarden didn't merely take a few mementos, so that one day the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren might have a sense of their ancestors. She took eight hundred photographs in less than eight years, which, given what each of them took to create, goes well beyond casual documentation. These were not albums filled with birthdays, holidays, graduations, balls, and weddings but objects that were meant to display the art of photography. We know of Lady Hawarden's art ambitions because she entered her pictures in exhibitions. Just the names of her acquaintances, mentioned in Dodier's pamphlet that accompanied the exhibition, place her smack in the middle of the art world of her day. There was her friend Sir Francis Seymour Haden, an eminent surgeon and a successful etcher; there was Sir Henry Cole, the director of the South Kensington Museum, which eventually became the Victoria and Albert; and there was Oscar Gustav Rejlander, who was as influential then as a photographer could become. But all this travelling in the right circles didn't mean that there were no barriers for Lady Hawarden and her work; it's no accident that until recently she didn't turn up in the art-history books. There is the fact that she was expressing herself with photography, a medium that had just begun its struggle to be respected as an art form. And, of course, that is not the only bias that Hawarden experienced.

Would a eulogy to a man comment, as Rejlander did of Lady Hawarden, that the photography community had lost "a member as useful as a clasp and bright as a diamond"? We know the answer, just as we know that Lady Hawarden and her daughters—no matter what privileges they enjoyed as the rich and beautiful people of their time—were born into lives with set patterns to which there was really only one acceptable answer: "I do." That is what makes these photographs so familiar and so moving. If these aren't women's photographs, what are? They were taken before the daughters' marriages, while their future was still outside that window, and when their sense of pleasure in each other drew them together and held them in the room for hours. There they put on costumes, enacted roles, and probably laughed like crazy, teased each other, and bucked when they had to freeze for an uncomfortable amount of time. From certain expressions on their faces one gets the feeling that they did their fair share of "Come on, Mom, I can't hold this pose forever!"

One can only imagine how precious Hawarden's photographs became to her family after she died: pictures to trigger the grief at what was now gone; reminders of the pleasure that once was. Each person in the Hawarden clan must have had an individual response to these idyllic views. To the child who was only a year old when Hawarden died, they surely meant something different from what they meant to the older girls, who were there in that room, and who became part of her art. When the photographs left the family and went to a museum, they lost their precise history, but they took on a new open-endedness, which fits right in with their capacity for suggesting stories.

Unfortunately, it's clear why they had to wait so long before being taken

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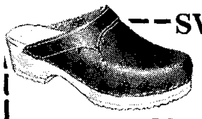

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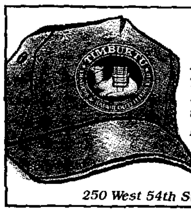

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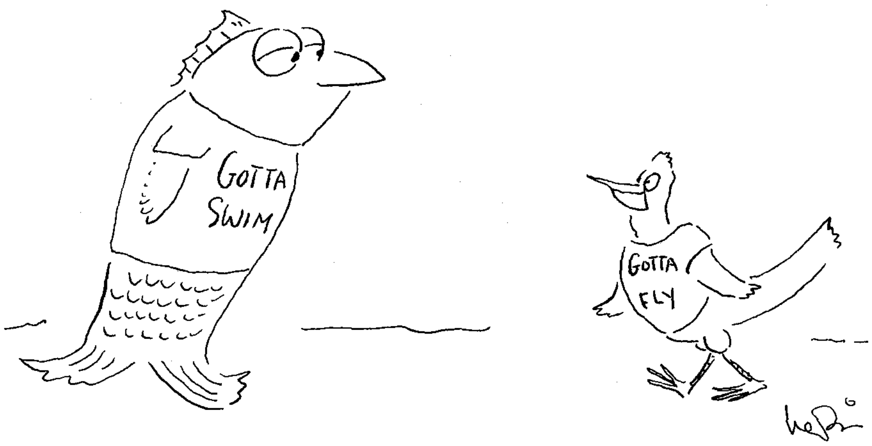

seriously enough to be put on exhibition. Everything about them projects that gender, "feminine," and that place, "home." There has been plenty of room in art history for works that depict interiors, and they often include families and pets, but it's rare to see such works in a museum if the perspective is that of the wife, mother, and overseer of the household. And the official history of photography is even more empty of domestic pictures by women than the history of painting is. Until recently, in most of the history books there was only Julia Margaret Cameron—like Mary Cassatt, an accomplished artist who became a token.

WHILE Lady Hawarden's work stands out through its beauty and originality, too much should not be made of the notion that she was working with a camera so soon after photography was invented. By her day, photography had become a fad—the *carte de visite* business was booming. And the camera was not just a professional tool but a device that was being seized upon by amateurs, many of them wealthy. For women of a certain class, photography was a genteel hobby just as it was for men. You can see how many women were using cameras by the end of the century in a recent book called "The Story of Kodak," which is chock-full of information.

"The Story of Kodak" has a long, at times fascinating text by Douglas Collins, and many wonderful pictures. This book, published by Abrams, doesn't feel nearly as heavily curated as art-historical photography books. It's not a connoisseur's book; although it does include famous images and famous names, many of the pictures have a homey quality to them. This domestic tone is in keeping with the company's oldest pitch for Kodak cameras: anybody can use them. And how was the point made that using a Kodak was as easy as pie? In part, with that old stereotype of unmechanical beings—women.

As is obvious from the early ads for Kodak reproduced in the book, the company's founder, George Eastman, knew how to use a woman to sell his product. Eventually, his brilliant marketing strategy of "the Kodak Girl" led to campaigns that make today's life-style packages look restrained. There was a "Vanity Kodak ensemble," for example, which included a color-coördinated camera, lipstick holder, compact, mirror, and change purse. Earlier ads weren't so tightly plugged in to the accessories market, but they, too, were fashion-conscious. The book includes a reproduction of an ad from 1889 that shows a woman dressed to the nines. Her camera case is as chic as a Chanel bag. The caption explains:

> The fashionable woman of the late nineteenth century, this 1889 advertising photo suggests, could carry a Kodak camera without the least bit of bother or embarrassment. With its leather carrying case strung over the shoulder, the Kodak camera was stylish, portable, and conveniently available whenever the occasion called for a picture.

From the perspective of today, these ads, and also a number of the book's snapshots and other illustrations, take on a peculiar twist. They could be reissued as feminist memorabilia. Just the fact that each of them depicts a different woman photographer places this book in a separate category from art-historical surveys of nineteenth-century photography; from most of these surveys you'd infer that a woman photographer in those days was as rare as the Hope Diamond.

ALTHOUGH women and photography is only a side topic of "The Story of Kodak," it emerges on a number of levels. We're shown a pinup photo of Marilyn Monroe with an inscription to a Kodak employee that reads, "Dear Daan—Please remember me in your emulsions. love, Marilyn." And we're told about another autographed pinup, to a Kodak researcher, on which Monroe thanks him and the company with "All I am I owe to Kodak and you." Monroe's off-the-cuff acknowledgments are revealing about photography's relationship to illusion. If ever there was a subject who illustrated the term "photogenic," it was Monroe. She knew how to use the camera as a tool for her self-inventions, but she got swallowed by an even bigger machine—Hollywood—and she has come to symbolize the tragedy of a person losing herself to her image. But, more than that, she is the symbol of what it means to be a sex object. For Monroe, clothes and cosmetics were a kind of mold. What she put on for the movies and for photographs always fitted her era's idea of a sexpot so well that her image became analogous to sex, though not the kind of sex that good girls then were supposed to know about. Monroe became an icon of sizzling, adulterous, uninhibited sex, the good-girl-gone-wrong type, an object of fantasy, not reality. Everything about her image reinforced this pinup idea of eros, from the way her lips were painted to the way her clothes so often revealed her body rather than covered it. If it weren't for people like Monroe, works such as Sherman's wouldn't have the same meaning.

While Sherman can "do" Monroe, she's the opposite of a Monroe. There's never any question that when it comes to Sherman's images it's she who's in charge. She's the director, the producer, the set designer, and the costume mistress, and the star as well. She casts herself; decides when she should smile, when she should frown; decides whether she'll look ridiculous or not. In her hands, images aren't straitjackets but vehicles to show the infinite possibilities of who she could be. For Sherman, clothes and makeup are the fixings with which she cooks up her various personae; they're the tools she has used to change her identity so convincingly that she has built a career out of the idea of transformation. Her work resonates for her audience because of what it embodies: it's hip suffragette art, pro-choice imagery. Here is someone who chooses who she's going to be, someone inventing herself in public. And although there's a lot of idealism to all this, Sherman's work isn't weighed down by a sense of agenda. She's a parodist at large, having fun with the world of appearances. We've seen her spoofing fashion, Hollywood, art history, even Christmas—she took a portrait of herself as Mrs. Claus for the *Times Magazine*.

Sherman's never impersonated Madonna, though, and no wonder. Madonna herself is always changing so fast it's hard to get a fix on her, which is part of her appeal, just as it is Sherman's. But there's a difference in what each has accomplished with the constant reinventing of her image. Madonna is about power; about being both a brilliant businesswoman and a sex goddess. She's trying to be Superwoman. Sherman's on a much humbler path. Her work isn't about projecting herself as bigger than others; the real Cindy Sherman remains anonymous. In fact, people are so used to seeing Sherman in disguise that when they run into her just as she is they often don't recognize her. In a way, she's more in disguise when she's not dressed up than she is when she's costumed as somebody else. Not dressed up, she melts into a crowd—just an ordinary woman in her thirties, in stretch pants, an innocuous top, hardly any makeup, simple-to-maintain hair. Hers is that contemporary unfussy look you see on so many women today. Call it invisible style, stylish no style—easy does it, not corsets and curlers.

Sherman's work has become so well known that certain photographs made years before she was born look like hers, and not the other way around. Recently, Keith de Lellis, a private photography dealer, told me he had picked up at auction some work from the nineteen-twenties that looked just like Cindy Sherman's pictures. He was right: this curious group of photographs, signed Mesdames Morter, is eerily Sherman-like. From the writing on the prints and from the documentation accompanying them, it's apparent that the Morters were two sisters who lived and worked in London. And their genre? One of them photographed the

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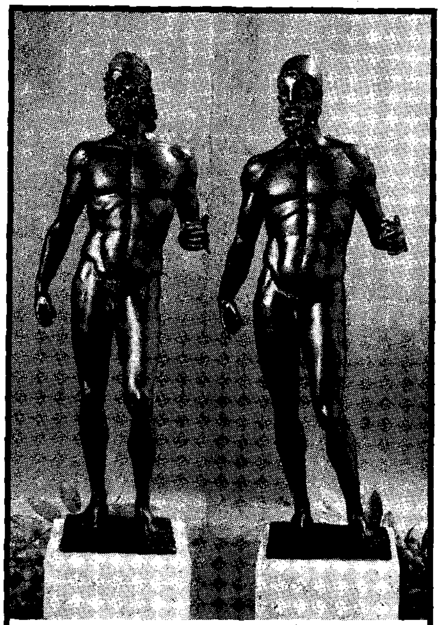

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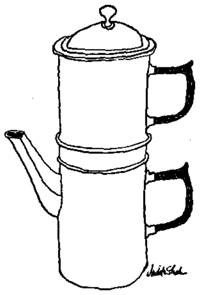
other in costume, playing out various themes. Penned descriptions at the bottom or on the back of their pictures tell us what's going on. The model holds up a feather duster, her face a caricature of industriousness; the inscription reads "The Modern Housemaid," and below there's a parenthetical addition, "Found in the coalcellar." Other photographs have such labels as "Unseemly Mirth," "Love's Hand," "Embarrassment," "The Squire's Daughter." There's a photograph in which the subject looks as if she had just seen an apparition. She's dressed in gypsy clothes, and she's acting very spooked. In this image, which is titled "Autumn Defying Winter," and in some of the others as well, there's a tone so similar to the feeling in some of Sherman's photographs that it's uncanny.



The Morters' pictures have much in common with Hawarden's, too: here again are sisters immersed in dressing up, fantasy, and photography. Like Hawarden, the Morters won prizes in their day. Like Hawarden, their renown was brief the first time around. Who knows what else we're going to discover about them in the future? The Morters' photographs aren't as perfect-looking as Hawarden's, and they're too eccentric to be moving in the way hers are. And, despite the Morters' use of old-fashioned subjects, it's clear that modern life has begun. Still, the same romanticism that is so seductive in Hawarden's work pervades theirs, too. In one photograph, the posing sister holds a letter to her heart, and underneath the image is written, "Why! Oh! Why?" You can't say that Sherman's photographs are romantic; too much has happened for them to be that. They were made after a sexual revolution that affected the sense of identity women and men had lived with for so long that it seems forever.

Until I saw Lady Hawarden's show, I took Sherman's use of costume for granted. Dressing up was just part of her style, and it's not so surprising a tactic: many artists use costume as an element of their work. But the similarities between the photography of Sherman and Hawarden raised questions. Is it the dressing up that makes the pictures by both these women so powerful? Is that what's so haunting about what they do? And in the idea of dressing up is there something especially meaningful to women?

I'd like the answer to the last question to be no, because generalizations about women and men are what got us into trouble in the first place. But to take away the specificity of what Sherman and Hawarden have created with dressing up is to drain their work of its impact, and to miss what is perhaps the most meaningful implication of their connection. Together, they suggest how dressing up could be used as a thread to weave in and out of the history of photography in order to help find what has been missing: the presence of women.

This is not to say that male artists don't do their share of dressing up, or that men don't know what role-playing's all about. Today, there are plenty of examples of male artists who employ costume. There are Gilbert and George, who dress like priss-pots; there are Peter McGough and David McDermott, who go about accoutred as late-nineteenth-century gentlemen; there's James Lee Byars, who parades around in all-gold or all-black ensembles, with top hat to match. And it could be said that the most famous work of the century to involve dressing up is by a man, Marcel Duchamp: his presentation of himself in drag as Rrose Sélavy (*Eros c'est la vie*). Yes, dressing up, dressing down, and going in drag are subjects that relate to both sexes, go way back in time, and have different histories in different cultures. In our culture, whether you embrace dress codes or rebel against them, they're there—so much there that each person's relationship to clothes becomes a personal statement. If you could track the wealth of imagery that has been produced in art and photography in which people use costume to express themselves, it would be a spectacle of self-assertion and of cultural revelation. And, of course, it would reaffirm our knowledge that there are men who go in for fancy dress, too. But let's remember: from the minute they're out of diapers, women have to deal with the world of appearances in a more inexorably pressured way than men do. That's what makes this a subject on which women are expert witnesses: all women—not only Clementina, Lady Hawarden, and Cindy Sherman.

—Ingrid Sischy

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

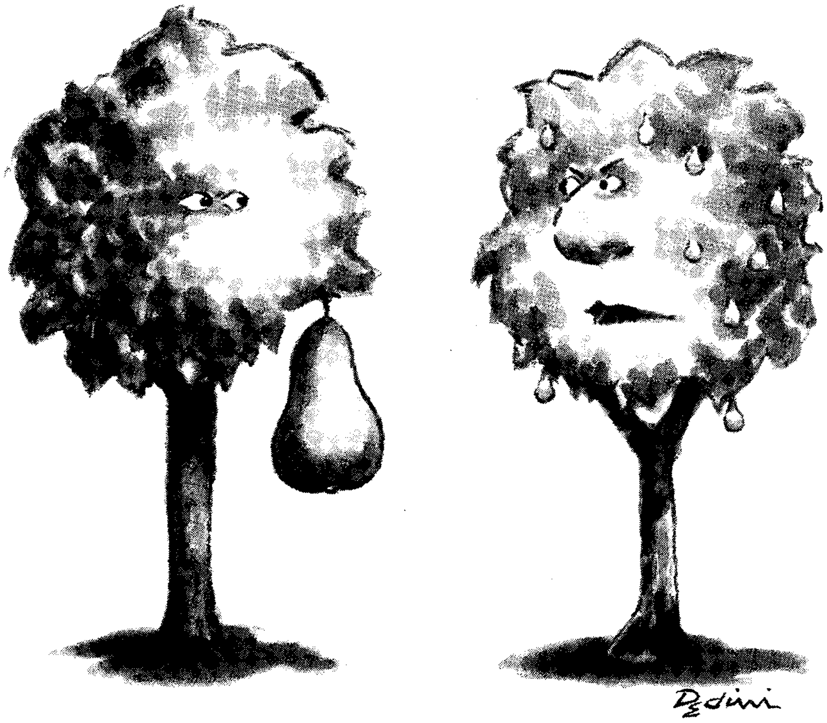
April 25

A STRAINED and defensive Bush Administration is now trying to cope with an aftermath it did not anticipate, with the criticism that has come its way, and with the reality that its victory in the Gulf War has begun to pall. It is also coping with the general truth that intricating is easier than extricating. Having now, belatedly, taken major responsibility for easing the desperate condition of the Kurdish refugees, it has backed itself into a situation it had hoped to avoid. In declining earlier to come to the military assistance of the Iraqi Kurds and Shiites rebelling against Saddam Hussein—who, of course, is still in power—it actually had a defensible strategy, but one that was very hard to explain. Its hesitance in getting relief to the refugees is nearly inexplicable—and unacceptable—to people horrified by the pictures of suffering and dying refugees. During the war, the Administration could essentially control what pictures we saw of what was going on. (The fact that CNN intruded on that control was largely what got the Administration so upset with that network.) Though many people disagreed, and there was some division within the Administration, it had sound, practical reasons for not coming to the military assistance of the rebels, but those reasons collided with moral issues and emotional reactions to what we saw. President Bush often seems uncomfortable with moral issues—save for the relatively straightforward one of aggression by one country against another (with valuable resources)—and with publicly stating emotions. In dealing with the tragedy of the Kurds, he reverted to his old habit of having "the slows," and was strangled in his own inarticulateness.

At one level, the tragedy of the Kurds is explained by such high-sounding, if cold-blooded, principles as balance of power and sovereignty. At another, it is explained by the Administration's calculations about the practicality of further involvement, and by its deep fear of getting into "another Vietnam." The Administration's thinking on this had largely to do with the short-term politics: a protracted war with difficult, and even uncertain, goals could easily turn sour in the public mind and risk the President's political standing. But a more long-term consideration was, or should have been, that if this use of force became deeply unpopular, it could be a very long time before the public would sanction the use of force again—even in an urgent cause.

The Kurdish tragedy puts in a new light what the President actually meant when he said numerous times that the Gulf War wouldn't be "another Vietnam." It used to appear that he meant simply to convey such things as that he wouldn't interfere with his generals, that it would be a short war. He also meant, clearly, that it would be a war of defined goals—and now the full meaning of that is coming clear. Early in the planning last fall, it was decided that in order for this war not to be "another Vietnam" we wouldn't explicitly take on the goal of trying to topple Saddam Hussein, and, as a corollary, we wouldn't go to Baghdad. Some officials were privately categorical about the latter point, but it was kept vague publicly in order to keep Hussein guessing. This may be one reason he kept a substantial number of troops—according to Administration officials, a third of his sixty divisions—outside the Kuwaiti theatre of operations and stationed, as precautions, on the Turkish and Iranian borders and around Baghdad. A senior Administration official recently explained to me the reasons for the decision not to go to Baghdad: "We decided early on if there was anything that could turn this into a Vietnam conflict it was going into densely populated areas and getting twelve soldiers a day killed by snipers. The main reason was that if we went in to overthrow him, how would we get out? If we set up a puppet government, how would we disentangle? That was the main question." Similar reasoning was offered by way of explaining the decision not to intervene militarily after the war—that one thing would lead to another. But there was another reason as well.

FOR some time, United States policy in the Gulf has been premised on the principle of balance of power, and many consequences, some of them bizarre, have flowed from that. Iran and Iraq being the major powers in the region, we have alternately acted to protect the one against the other in order to keep either of them from dominating the region—in particular, the small, wealthy oil-producing emirates and Saudi Arabia. It's not quite clear whether the balance-of-power principle grows out of theology or reality. A senior Administration official says, "You can't prove it." But from this principle came the policy of preserving an intact postwar Iraq, one that wouldn't be prey to predatory instincts



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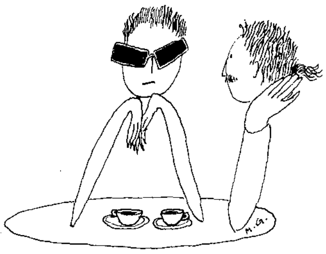
on the part of Iran or Syria. And from that principle came the policy of not only not favoring separatist movements within Iraq—the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south—but actually wanting them to be put down. Though the Kurds said that all they wanted was "autonomy," key Administration officials didn't trust this, since the Kurds have been trying for a very long time to establish their own state in the region. Administration officials, by and large, are less romantic about the Kurds than many of its outside critics. And, of course, the idea of autonomy for the Kurds presented a threat to Turkey, which has a substantial Kurdish minority; and Turgut Ozal, the President of Turkey, sided with us during the war and has worked hard to become one of President Bush's best friends.



A senior official told me recently, "We never favored these kinds of nationalist secessionist uprisings." He insists that the Administration never "specifically" encouraged a Kurdish uprising. It is probably the case that when, on February 15th, the President urged the Iraqi people "to take matters into their own hands" to force Saddam Hussein to step aside he was aiming his remarks at groups—the military, the Baathists—who he thought might produce someone who would be more our kind of Iraqi leader; but perhaps the Kurds didn't quite get the distinction. Reportedly, the President's remarks on February 15th weren't the subject of any serious consideration within the Administration, and were prompted by television pictures that morning of Iraqis celebrating the news that Saddam Hussein had made his first peace feeler. But the President also made similar remarks subsequently. The Administration apparently wanted rebellion—but only up to a point. These things are hard to modulate. There are no known signs that the United States specifically promised the Kurdish rebels any help, but it has been reported that in January the President signed a "finding" authorizing clandestine activities to support opposition forces inside Iraq, and there have been reports of radio broadcasts, which some have traced to the C.I.A., encouraging rebellion. Administration officials, of course, won't comment on intelligence activities, but the congressional Intelligence Committees may look into these matters. When Brent Scowcroft, the President's national security adviser, was asked on "Meet the Press" in early April whether any precautions had been taken to warn the Kurds that if they rose we wouldn't help, he replied, "I don't think that we said, 'No, don't rise up or you will get nothing from us,' " and he added that that should have been clear from the President's statements that we wouldn't take any steps to overthrow Hussein. (Scowcroft also said that "there may have been" broadcasts from Saudi Arabia and Egypt encouraging revolt.) Further, officials have privately confirmed that Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Syria—with our knowledge—were sending arms and money to the rebels.

One gets the sense that some officials were fairly irritated with the Kurds for causing all this trouble, and of a definite feeling—reinforced perhaps by defensiveness—that the Kurds would have risen even without the encouragement. They had risen several times before, and now they saw the opportunity of a weakened central Iraqi government. Saudi officials, like our officials, wanted to see Hussein replaced by a "reliable" military leader or someone from the Baathist élite. Being Sunnis themselves (and having worries about their own Shiite minority), they wanted above all for Iraq to continue to be governed by a Sunni Muslim. According to an Administration official, the Saudis' second choice was to leave Saddam Hussein in power. Like the United States, Saudi Arabia feared the breakup, or "Lebanonization," of Iraq. But a growing number of officials quietly express doubt that there is anyone in those circles who would be much more appetizing than Saddam Hussein; the Baathist élite is apparently no roses. Moreover, one key official characterizes the émigré opposition as "feckless," and without a domestic base in Iraq. Further, if our goal is to preserve a united Iraq there is some question whether anything other than an autocratic, even despotic, government is possible. When Scowcroft was asked on "Meet the Press" whether Iraq could be held together by anything other than brutality, he replied, wearily, "I don't know the answer to that question.”

The Saudis “and others,” a senior official says, “were more willing to play with fire” by encouraging nationalist revolts as a way of weakening Hussein —a strategy that some United States officials feel backfired. The official says, “Stirring up nationalist sentiments that it was thought would weaken Saddam ended up strengthening him. Some of us felt the longer the civil war went on the stronger his hand would get, because he would be able to portray himself as the savior of Iraq. We didn't want the nationalist rebellions; we didn't want to see the splintering of Iraq.” Though the President still speaks longingly of Hussein's overthrow, there is now a fairly widespread assumption within the government that putting down the rebellions did strengthen Hussein's hand, and there are fewer predictions that he will be out anytime soon. A senior official said to me recently, “After all the options we've been through that weren't successful and what we've been through now, it's hard to see how it could be done.”

In the interest of balance of power, the Administration had wanted the war to result in an Iraq strong enough to be able to withstand Iran (and Syria). The devastating damage that our bombers did to Iraq's infrastructure may have weakened Iraq more than the antiseptic planning papers envisioned. But in a recent conversation a senior Administration official rejected my characterization of Iraq as “flattened”; he had recently seen a report, he said, which said Iraq could recover in ten years. The Administration didn't want seeds sown for further instability down the road, when a revanchist Baghdad government, having lost its Kurdish province, would seek to get it back, à la the Sudetenland. (But this was only one of several possible forms of future instability.) Therefore, the Administration's policy was the explicit, if unpublicized, one that it was necessary to allow Saddam Hussein to put down the rebellions.

FROM this flowed the decision not to shoot down the helicopters Hussein used for subduing the Kurds. The decision, according to officials, wasn't so much about the helicopters per se as it was about any involvement in the civil war. Though officials didn't mind seeing the rebellions subdued, they couldn't say so publicly, so their public arguments had to do with the military consequences of getting involved. Publicly, officials made their other argument: that shooting down the helicopters wouldn't have disabled the Iraqi military from quashing the rebellions—that the military would still have tanks and artillery with which Hussein could have prevailed. A senior official says, “If we had given the Kurds arms, we would have got a lot more Kurds killed, but it wouldn't have changed the outcome.” So, the Administration's argument went, in order to enable the rebellions to succeed (which we actually didn't want to do) we would have had to engage fully in the civil war, march on Baghdad, install a new regime, protect that regime (which would have lacked legitimacy because of our participation)—and we certainly would have had a Vietnam on our hands. A senior official says, “I don't think Americans would have felt a lot more comfortable watching Kurds being crushed by tanks than shot from helicopters.” He adds that it was “naïve to think that shooting down a few helicopters” would have solved the Kurds' problems. Officials point out that we had no mandate from the United Nations to involve ourselves in an Iraqi civil war, and that, though the British might have joined us, our Arab allies didn't want us occupying an Arab country and setting up its government. The Administration was most anxious to do nothing that could cause the nation's feeling about a popular war to turn sour. The President had largely stuck to his publicly stated goals—though the objective of smashing Iraq's military machine hadn't been so clear. Had he then expanded those goals to include something that was murky and could have been messy, a President's credibility the next time he tried to rally support for a limited military purpose would have been gone. *That's* where Vietnam comes in. Beyond that, the Administration wanted to get the rebellions over with. A senior official said to me not long ago, “Saddam Hussein's departure becomes more likely when the rebellions subside.” He added that “when things seemed out of control” those who might have overthrown Hussein felt they had to deal with the rebellions first.

The military wanted no part of getting near the Iraqi civil war, and Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint

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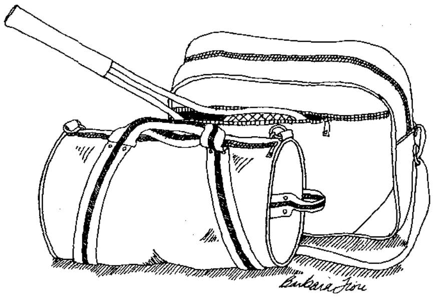
Chiefs of Staff, strongly opposed shooting down the helicopters. From the outset, Powell had insisted upon a clear and defined military purpose, and now the military was enjoying newfound glory. The overriding goal of the President and the Pentagon was to get the troops home and enjoy the parades. Administration officials argued that it would be more difficult militarily to shoot down the helicopters (as opposed to fixed-wing aircraft, which we did shoot down) than the critics supposed—that helicopters fly close to the ground, thus making their attackers vulnerable to anti-aircraft, and that the helicopters were operating far to the north of where our forces were stationed along the Iraq-Kuwait border, and so on—but these weren't the real reasons the Administration decided not to shoot down the helicopters. (The rationale for shooting down fixed-wing planes was that they could be a threat to our troops.) And, for all the firm reasons the Administration gave for the inefficacy of shooting down the helicopters, its internal policy was less clear-cut. A senior official told me recently that if the Iraqis had used the helicopters to attack the rebels with chemicals, "we probably would have done something to ground the helicopters." In other words, had matters become too embarrassing we would have got around the logistical problems.

The President's public wobbling on the subject—saying in Ottawa on March 13th that the Iraqi use of helicopters against Iraqi civilians was "in violation of what our understanding was," and "Warning them, do not do this," and the next day backing off a bit, saying of such use of the helicopters, "All that does is make it very, very complicated in terms of bringing about a final ceasefire"—is explained in various ways by various officials (some say the President went beyond his brief), but it was emblematic of the Administration's own mixed views on what to do about the helicopters. As the world now knows, when General Norman Schwarzkopf met with Iraqi officials at Safwan, a town in the Iraqi desert, to arrange interim ceasefire terms, the Iraqis asked for and received an exception to our ban on the use of aircraft, so that they could use helicopters, they said, to ferry officials around within Iraq because we had destroyed most of the roads. This was the deal on which Schwarzkopf said, in his famous interview with David Frost on PBS in late March, he was "suckered." The Administration could have ordered him to get unsuckered fast, but it chose not to. A senior official recently said to me, pointedly, "Norm didn't say, 'O.K., you can't use them for these purposes.' " He added, "There were never any subsequent requests from out there to ground helicopters."

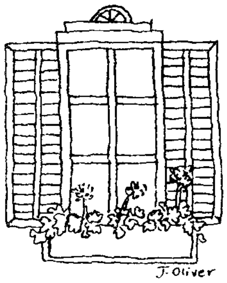
Following the President's varying statements on helicopters, the Administration's officially stated position was that our policy on the use of helicopters was "ambiguous": it didn't want to tell the Iraqis that it was perfectly O.K. to use the helicopters to mow down civilians, but it also didn't want to get into the business of shooting down the helicopters. For some time, the issue of going after the helicopters remained a matter of internal debate. Some officials argued that we owed it to the Kurds, and that we should use this opportunity to finish off Saddam Hussein. Even if it hadn't tipped the balance, some now say, we should have done what we could. An official who favored going after the helicopters says, "The more the issue got defined as helping the Kurds win the civil war the more it prejudiced the President's mind against it." Actually, the internal debate—described by an official as vigorous—over the helicopters was about two different things: whether to take any part in the civil war, and whether it was essential to hold the Iraqis to their word at Safwan. (Some officials, in particular at the Pentagon, felt that Schwarzkopf had been too lenient at Safwan anyway. An official says that they tried to get guidance to Schwarzkopf to avoid the kind of negotiating he did, but that he resisted, saying, in effect, "I can handle it.") Toward the end of March, the policy of purposeful ambiguity was no longer holding; the public outcry had grown against our countenancing the Iraqis' use of the helicopters for slaughtering their own people, and it was increasingly clear that we weren't going to do anything about it. A senior official says, "The ambiguity was of decreasing utility." The high-level Administration meeting on March 26th, where the subject was brought up one last time, has become well known here, but may be being given more significance than it had. A senior official says, "It was the formal end to any kind of internal debate on this issue; it was more a ratification of where we had come out after several weeks of formal and informal consideration of this issue." It has become known that in the meeting Powell strenuously opposed reëngaging militarily in Iraq, and that Vice-President Dan Quayle raised the question of whether we should do more to help the Kurds. (Some here see in the spreading of this story some precaution against Powell's possibly getting in the way of Quayle's career.) Following this meeting, Marlin Fitzwater, the President's press secretary, let it be known that we wouldn't shoot down Iraqi helicopters being used against rebels unless the helicopters posed a threat to U.S. or coalition forces. The announcement, says a senior official, "was a way of shutting off the debate."



SCHWARZKOPF's interview with Frost, coincidentally aired the next day, set off another storm, since it raised the question of whether the war had been ended too soon. His comments couldn't have come at a worse time for the Administration. It was already taking a lot of heat for not aiding the rebels, and there had been news accounts suggesting more troops and tanks had escaped the Kuwaiti theatre of operations than the Administration had said. Even before the interview was aired, Administration officials were privately already becoming somewhat weary of Schwarzkopf—feeling that he talked too much and had become too intoxicated with the spotlight. His expansiveness, some already thought, was likely to get him in trouble. According to some officials, Powell had warned him about this. Earlier, in the course of the war, an official had said to me—apropos of some Schwarzkopf pronouncement—"Norm gets carried away." The same thing was said privately by various officials after the Frost interview—but some harbored suspicions of something darker.

Actually, what Schwarzkopf said in

the interview was more ambiguous than many press accounts at the time had it. Speaking about the decision to end the war when we did, Schwarzkopf said, "Frankly, my recommendation had been, you know, continue the march. I mean, we had them in a rout and we could have continued to . . . wreak great destruction upon them. We could have completely closed the door and made it, in fact, a battle of annihilation." He also said that we had accomplished our military objectives, and went on to praise the President for making "a very humane decision and a very courageous decision"—adding that it was one "that historians are going to second-guess, you know, forever." For the critics of the Administration's unwillingness to help the Kurds militarily, this was further fuel. Their conclusion was that if the war had been continued for a little longer the rebels might have been safe, but this doesn't appear to comport with reality. First, there is the Administration's point that twenty Iraqi divisions hadn't been stationed in the Kuwaiti theatre of operations. Second, while some tanks did escape the K.T.O., many more were already in Iraq. A senior official says, "Even if we had destroyed every tank and soldier in the Kuwaiti theatre of operations, it would not have affected Saddam Hussein's ability to put down the insurrections." Another senior official says, "The Iraqi military not only had the tanks, it had helicopters to move people around, it had the ability to communicate and coördinate. There was never much question about who would prevail."



At the time the decision was made, on February 27th, to stop the fighting, the Administration was in fact coming under substantial fire for engaging in "overkill": Kuwait had been liberated; tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers had surrendered; and it was clearly no contest. Even American soldiers were expressing some revulsion at being engaged in a "turkey shoot." Saddam Hussein had made various offers to withdraw, which we had dismissed, and pilots were describing allied strikes against columns of Iraqi vehicles fleeing north from Kuwait on what became known as the "highway of death" as "like shooting fish in a barrel." A senior Pentagon official says, "The American soldier has a sense that 'O.K., the contest is over.' I don't think a Presidential order to shoot every last thing that moves would have gone down well with our troops." Within the Administration councils, Powell was making the argument that to go on would have been "unchivalrous" in the medieval sense. Even an official who says he had wished we had continued the fighting for another couple of days says that once Kuwait was liberated "We had to stretch to say we were still working within the U.N. mandate." When the President's war cabinet met in the White House that day, there was some—but apparently not very strenuous—debate over whether to continue the operation for another twenty-four hours, and that night the President announced the cessation of "offensive combat operations." The decision, a senior official says, was based on the consideration of "whether it was worth it" to take out the last forces in the Kuwaiti theatre of operations. "The military value of that," the official says, "didn't seem so great, or enough to overcome the screaming that would have come our way if we'd kept it going. We were trying to get ahead of the curve, not be behind it. Maybe a few hundred Iraqi tanks got out—it wasn't militarily significant." He adds, "What got out of the K.T.O. may have made it easier and quicker to put down the uprisings, but it wasn't necessary." (The Pentagon recently confirmed that about seven hundred tanks escaped.) A Pentagon official says that the information given Defense Secretary Dick Cheney the morning of the decision to stop the war was that the Republican Guards were now completely cut off from escape, and the only people who were getting out were those who left heavy equipment behind. In his famous press conference that day—held before the meeting at the White House—Schwarzkopf said, "The gates are closed," adding, "There was no way out of here." The next day, it was revealed that some tanks and troops were escaping. A Pentagon official says, "I don't know why our information wasn't better. It wasn't there that day. Within twenty-four hours we began to get new information."

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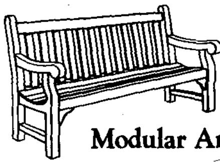

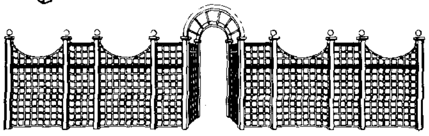

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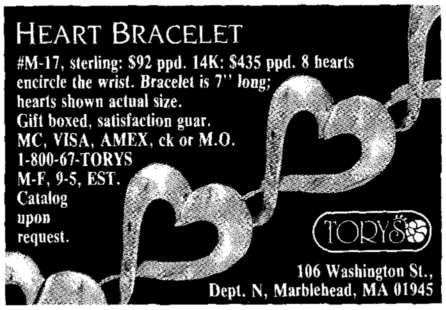

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President, were far more irritated with Schwarzkopf for his comments to Frost than they let on publicly—their cool public statements were an indicator. On the day of the interview (the transcript had already been distributed to news agencies), Cheney, speaking for the President, issued a statement saying, "General Schwarzkopf and General Powell were consulted and made the recommendation to me and to the President that we had achieved our military objectives and agreed that it was time to end the campaign." (In his press conference on the last day of the war, Schwarzkopf had said, "We've accomplished our mission, and when the decision-makers come to the decision that there should be a ceasefire, nobody will be happier than me.") But the next day Bush, almost as if he were afraid of the general who had become a near-mythic figure, phoned Schwarzkopf to tell him not to worry about a thing. Schwarzkopf's saying a couple of days later that he had been in agreement with the President "a hundred per cent," and that he wished he had used the word "planned" rather than "recommendation"—"because that's what it was, we initially planned to do one thing"—kept matters still muddy. Officials later said flatly that Schwarzkopf had made no "recommendation" to the President, to Cheney, or to Powell to continue the fighting. When pressed on what, then, Schwarzkopf was talking about, why he had made his comments, almost all officials replied with the identical clipped comment, "You'll have to ask him." But the operative word may be "recommendation." A senior official recently said to me, of the decision to stop, "It was sooner than a lot of people assumed. The question was, Was it a military mistake to stop then? We knew we wouldn't get everything. I think Norm assumed in his own mind that he had more time." Thus Schwarzkopf's use of the word "planned." Schwarzkopf himself has since said that when Powell asked him how he would feel about ending the war when we did, he had replied, "That's fine. We have accomplished all of our military objectives, and we can stop . . . or we can continue the attack." An official says, "Schwarzkopf assumed he could go ahead and *annihilate* and the President overruled." A senior official speculates that "after the fact" Schwarzkopf may have wished the battle had been continued and in talking with Frost "got carried away." Of Schwarzkopf's remarks to Frost, an official says, "Those comments came at a time we were getting hit for not going far enough. They weren't helpful." The private irritation was caused by the belief, the official says, that "one of the team was trying to look good at others' expense —particularly the President's."

SOME Administration officials admit privately that they were slow on the uptake in getting relief to the estimated seven hundred thousand Kurds who fled Iraq for the Turkish border. More than a million were estimated to have fled to Iran, and were said to be marginally better off (a fine distinction), because the Iranians, unlike the Turks, didn't try to keep them out and the topography isn't as forbidding. But their situation was grim nonetheless, and this week the Administration agreed to send them aid. A senior official said to me, "I'm not going to sit here and tell you there wasn't a political dimension." That is, we took the opening to improve relations with the Iranians. Officials offer as reasons it took us a while to get mobilized to help the Kurdish refugees that there was a lack of information as to how many Kurds were actually fleeing, that the number suddenly swelled, and so on. The more honest reason, according to one senior official, is that the Administration "didn't want to get involved." Another senior Administration official says, "The uncertainties went back to August, when we decided we didn't want to get involved in the internal affairs of Iraq." The Administration had an instinct that what would happen is what has happened: that once we began to take responsibility for the welfare of the Kurds we would be drawn further and further in. The Administration didn't want to give even humanitarian relief to the Kurds while the rebellion was still going on, an official says, because that was seen as like giving non-lethal aid to the Contras—that is, taking sides in a civil war—so the Administration decided it had to wait until the Kurds were refugees, no longer fighters. Thereafter, each step was hesitant, late, and in some part in reaction to the prodding by others—mainly the British and the French—and in very large part in reaction to the American public's reaction to the pictures on television. The ad-hoc nature of the policymaking was quite apparent. When I asked a senior official last week what the Administration had foreseen in the way of uprisings, he replied, "I don't think we predicted anything in particular about uprisings." He added that the Administration did expect some refugees after the war—and that most of them would come out through Jordan.

The decision early last week to establish enclaves for the Kurds in northern Iraq, to be guarded by our armed forces along with British and French troops, was a reversal of the policy of a week before. At that time, officials said that we shouldn't proceed with enclaves, because there was no United Nations mandate for so interfering with the sovereignty of Iraq, and because the Soviets and the Chinese, with an eye to their own problems, didn't like the idea of foreign-protected enclaves and might veto such a proposal in the Security Council. But all these objections gave way to the increasingly devastating pictures. The State Department estimated that between five hundred and a thousand Kurdish refugees were dying a day. Besides, Turkey hadn't wanted a large number of Kurds to become too ensconced close to, or over, its border, and Ozal pleaded with Bush to establish a safe haven for them within Iraq.

Bush was assured by his advisers that using American troops to protect the enclaves wouldn't get in the way of his determination to bring the Operation Desert Storm troops home as soon as possible: this new responsibility would be given to the European Command, rather than the Central Command headed by Schwarzkopf—and, in a symbolic act, Schwarzkopf came home last weekend. Officials say that they do not expect our new responsibilities to result in renewed hostilities with Iraq, because Iraq is now so weak and it wants to be out from under the burdensome U.N. ceasefire terms as soon as possible. The Kurds are being discouraged from using the new camps as a base for guerrilla action against Iraq. Officials are skeptical that Saddam Hussein's reported tentative accord with the Kurds reached this week will lead to the Kurds' returning home. No one wants the camps, or our new responsibilities, to go on for a very long time, but no one knows when they will end.

—ELIZABETH DREW

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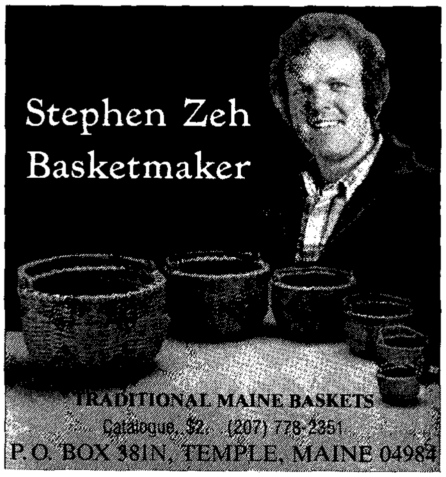

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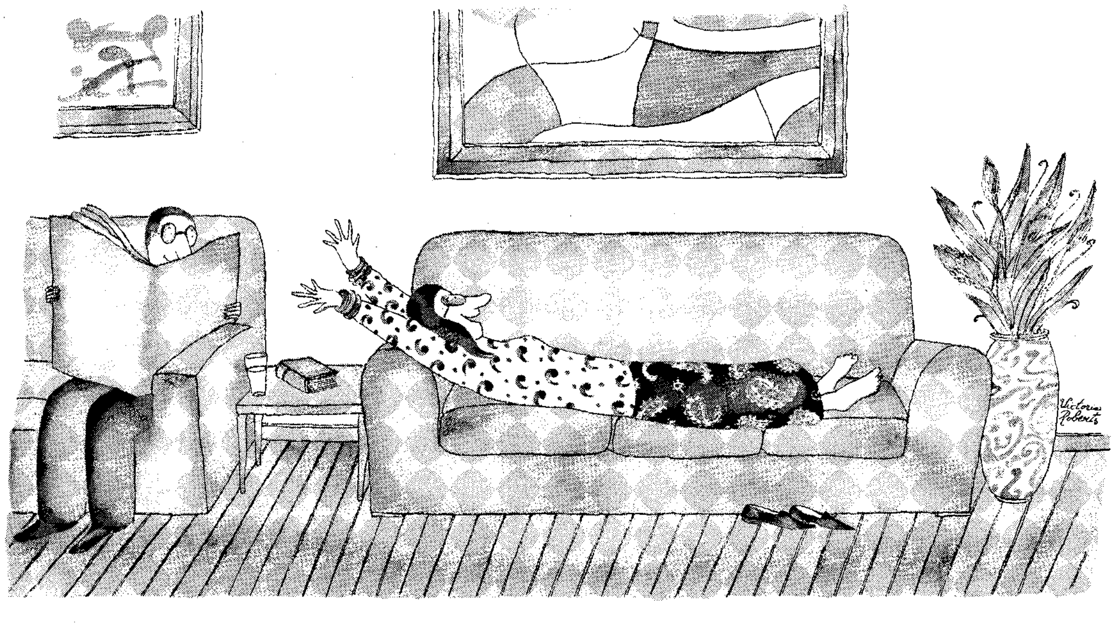
Vital Fluid

Daniel Yergin's "The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power" (Simon & Schuster; $27.50) is a compelling and comprehensive history of the oil industry, from the first oil well ever drilled (near Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859) to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It recalls advances in technology, innovations in salesmanship, and wars and truces among corporations and nations. In his prologue Yergin reminds us that the petroleum industry is the world's largest, and that its history recapitulates the growth of modern business—of world capitalism, or, since so many oil fields are now owned by governments, of the world's mixed economy. As a strategic material, petroleum has also been a prize in this century's wars and in the struggle for national power between wars. Yergin points out, too, that ours has become the "hydrocarbon age": almost every aspect of our material culture depends on petroleum and its derivatives. Yergin is always specific but never loses us in detail. He writes quiet, unexaggerated prose, comprehensible to nonspecialists, and artfully manages vast research. He helps us envision the world before the hydrocarbon age and so appreciate a continuous ribbon of creativity: chapter by chapter, his narrative proceeds like a developing photograph of our times.

The oil industry was founded in the nineteenth century to meet the need for an illuminant, kerosene, that can be extracted from petroleum, and the industry continued to flourish after electricity replaced kerosene because a new invention, the automobile, increased the demand for petroleum. Gasoline outsold kerosene by 1910, yet the First World War's military planners still relied on horses for transport, calculating one horse for every three soldiers and ten times as much food for each horse as for each man. Yergin thinks that generals didn't begin to glimpse the possibilities of the internal-combustion engine until September, 1914, when General Joseph Gallieni, in a desperate improvisation, hired all the taxis of Paris to chauffeur French reinforcements to the first Battle of the Marne. But though the military was slow to adopt new technology, civilian petroleum cultures, or subcultures, quickly took root. One example Yergin mentions dates back to 1892, when the company that later became known as Shell almost failed to break into Far Eastern markets because it planned to distribute kerosene in bulk, assuming that customers would bring their own containers. In the Orient, however, Standard Oil's kerosene cans had become a precious raw material, used for making "everything from roofing to birdcages to opium cups, hibachis, tea strainers, and egg beaters," and the newcomer had to manufacture cans of its own to compete. Everything turns up in the history of oil. Yergin tells us that until around 1930 Kuwait's main industry and source of foreign exchange was pearl diving; then Japanese cultured pearls entered the market, and the emir decided to explore for oil.

Throughout Yergin's narrative of the past hundred and thirty years, there are repeated reminders of the plenty and comfort that the hydrocarbon age has brought. Recounting the oil companies' promotion of central heating in post-Second World War England, he quotes a Shell manager: "The Englishman began to realize that there was no value in being cold." Yet although Yergin's retrospect is one of human betterment produced by intelligence and imagination, there aren't many morally admirable human beings in his book. Near the start, we meet John D. Rockefeller, a Cleveland produce merchant who invested in an oil refinery in 1863, decided to make oil his main business in 1865, and, by 1870, planned to win a monopoly for his Standard Oil. His cruel, dishonest methods became infamous. Yergin never intrudes moral judgments, or attempts to tell his readers how they ought to feel. Instead, he dispassionately recounts what happened, relying on documentation rather than handwringing whenever his tale records—as it often does—wickedness. The monopoly that Rockefeller sought eluded him in the end, because domestic political and legal opposition culminated, in 1911, in a Supreme Court decision ordering the dissolution of Standard Oil for violating the Sherman Act. It's consoling to discover that that dissolution demonstrates the accuracy of the criticisms of monopoly we are taught in elementary economics: each of Standard's seven successor companies proved more profit-



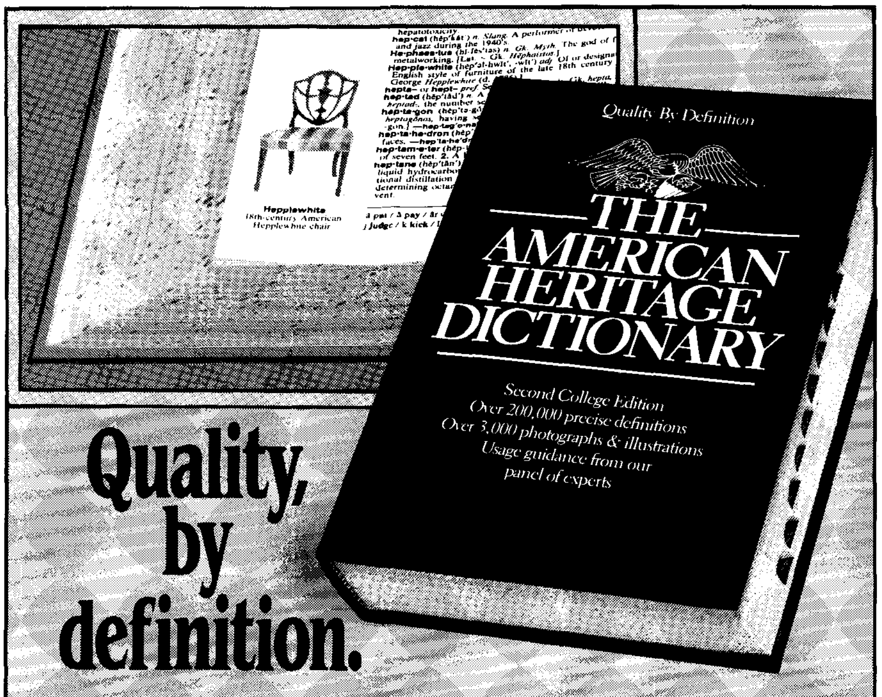
"There's a changing of the guard, and my weaknesses are suddenly my strengths!"

able on its own than it had been as a tentacle of the "octopus"—Standard of Indiana spectacularly so, for it was free to go ahead with an improved refining process the parent company had vetoed.

Rockefeller would have been forced to share the wealth in any case, because there was more oil in the world than any single company could hope to control. Russia, Romania, the Netherlands East Indies, Mexico, and Persia were all substantial oil producers before the First World War. But Rockefeller's was not the last effort to dominate the petroleum industry, though later attempts involved agreements among several parties rather than command by one. A "pool association" of international giants—called "majors"—failed in the nineteen-thirties, partly because the members didn't wholly trust each other, partly because nonmembers undersold them. OPEC looks like the world's most successful oil cartel so far, but its effectiveness, too, has suffered from its members' divergent interests and from production by nonmembers.

Owning oil increases national power but cannot guarantee it. Yergin emphasizes the contribution of America's oil resources to the Allied victory in the Second World War (we supplied ninety per cent of the Allies' oil). I think it's also worth recalling, however, that we had achieved Great Power status before the hydrocarbon age, and that some nations with plenty of oil have never attained it. When Yergin retells the familiar narrative of the Second World War from the less familiar perspective of oil, he suggests that the connection between oil and power has been oversimplified. Germany and Japan were oil poor, and made conquering other countries' oil fields a goal of war. That venture turned out to be uneconomic, because it costs oil to conquer oil. One of Yergin's best illustrations comes from the German campaign in North Africa: fuel trucks making the round trip from the port of Tripoli to the German lines at El Alamein consumed more gasoline than they delivered to Rommel's tanks. When, toward the close of the volume, Yergin reëxamines the relationship between power and oil, he notes the economic strength of Japan and Germany today and remarks that oil is "a prize that can be overvalued."

More recent examples of delusive assumptions about oil and power come from the Middle East. Yergin reminds us that Middle Eastern oil seeps were



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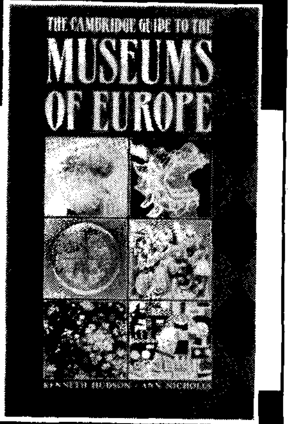

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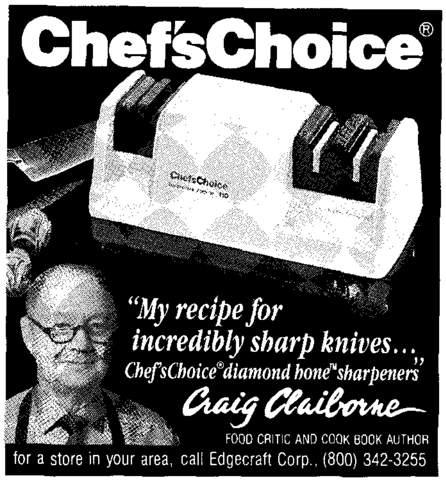

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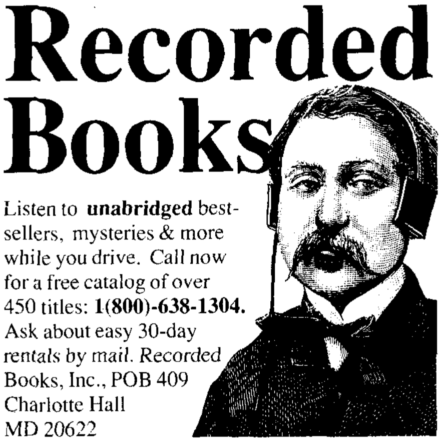

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known in antiquity—he finds a reference to petroleum in the Iliad—but modern exploration didn't begin until after 1900, when the shah of Persia sent an envoy to Europe to peddle an oil concession to any investor he could find. Yergin recounts the many reasons that exploration and exploitation in the Middle East went slowly between the world wars, and notes that only after the Second World War were all the technological and institutional arrangements in place to guarantee the world a steady supply of inexpensive Middle Eastern oil. Then, in the nineteen-fifties, Muhammad Mossadegh, the Prime Minister of Iran, and Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Egyptian dictator, revealed new possibilities of political interference with economic arrangements. (Earlier political upheavals—the Bolshevik Revolution and Mexico's nationalization of oil, in 1938—had been less threatening, because the world was using less oil.) After Nasser seized and blocked the Suez Canal, which by 1956 had become the route for Middle Eastern oil going to Europe, French and British leaders likened him to Hitler, but Americans thought that the comparison was overwrought. Yet when I read Yergin's account of the whole gallery of dictatorial leaders it seems to me that Mossadegh and Nasser—along with the last shah, Ayatollah Khomeini, Muammar Qaddafi, and Saddam Hussein—do share some or all of Hitler's traits, and their behavior casts a retrospective light on historical assessments of the German tyrant that see him as unique. Hitler remains astonishing because we feel that Western Europe had outgrown irrational autocrats by the nineteen-thirties. In any case, Yergin offers an illuminating contrast to the Middle East's dictators whenever he describes the behavior of the Saudis. Their interest in making money, not to mention their shrewdness in extracting it, has been second to nobody's, but their kings seem to have always understood that demonstrating their power by wrecking their customers' economies would ruin their own.

Yergin's book develops more themes than I can begin to suggest. If, for example, you isolate his narrative of the United States' dealings with Venezuela, you need no further explanation of our unpopularity in Latin America. One story that I especially appreciate explains how the United States used up so much of its oil so fast. To begin with, legal doctrine encouraged—practically mandated—draining oil wells dry, because nineteenth-century American courts applied the common-law "rule of capture" to oil fields. Yergin tells us that the rule originally dealt with wild animals, holding that if a wild pheasant, say, flew from A's estate to B's, B was entitled to shoot it. In an oil field, that rule told every owner to race every other owner to "capture" the oil. By the nineteen-twenties, Harry Doherty, an oil entrepreneur, realized that the underground pressure from gas and water which brings oil to the surface was reduced by breakneck draining, to the point where a lot of oil was left unrecovered. He proposed to "unitize" oil fields—to apply the era's best engineering techniques to getting all the oil out, and to share the scientifically extracted oil proportionately among the field's owners. He thought that the federal government would have to accept, and possibly supervise, such a system. New oil discoveries in Oklahoma and Texas appeared to make his anxieties about wasted, unrecovered oil irrelevant, but by the nineteen-thirties an oil glut had combined with the Depression to persuade the majors to welcome government management. Yergin shows that even after the Supreme Court declared the National Industrial Recovery Act, which included an oil code, unconstitutional, in 1935, the framework of federal-state-producer coöperation to limit production remained intact, and, with the help of a tariff on imported oil, sustained oil prices. During the Second World War, the federal government mobilized the oil industry for maximum production, and got it. Farsighted individuals, both in the oil industry and outside it, realized that we couldn't produce indefinitely at wartime rates, yet none of the nineteen-forties proposals to conserve our oil resources succeeded politically. Foreign oil imported by the major oil companies was cheap, but in 1959 independent domestic producers were able to force an extremely reluctant President Eisenhower to impose import quotas on foreign oil. The quotas lasted for fourteen years, and kept the price of oil high enough to preserve, or protect, the American oil industry. By 1973, though, we had no spare oil capacity.

Yergin quotes Senator Russell Long, of Louisiana, explaining to representatives of the majors, who objected to the import quotas, that the independents were politically unbeatable, because they employed American voters and paid taxes to American state governments. (Here's a question that Yergin doesn't answer. Discussing Iran, he comments on the difficulty of absorbing floods of oil money, but he gives us no idea how our oil states have absorbed *their* floods of money. I don't hear that primary education in Texas, say, or Oklahoma has become a model for the rest of the country.) Yergin also reminds us that George Bush, who made his money as an independent oilman, visited Saudi Arabia as Vice-President in 1986, during a collapse of oil prices, and suggested that OPEC cut production until prices rose to a level that would allow American oil production to remain profitable. The President apparently believes that American national security needs a domestic oil industry now more than it needs oil reserves in the future. Although Yergin found that, "given time, markets will adjust and allocate," it seems that no oilman ever really trusts markets.

I shouldn't imply that this book is an assault on the oil industry. Yergin shows us the misdeeds of oil companies, but he also shows the costs and risks of exploration, and the industry's political insecurity, at home as well as abroad: at one moment, in the nineteen-fifties, the Department of Justice was bringing an antitrust suit against the majors at the same time that the State Department was encouraging their participation in foreign trusts; Yergin describes this policy as "schizophrenic."

Every administration from the New Deal on has worked at an energy policy, and, intermittently, oil companies have tried to: between 1980 and 1982, Exxon fruitlessly invested a billion dollars in a project to extract oil from shale. My hunch is that past programs, even those that failed, may have bequeathed us a useful crew of energy specialists. Yergin helps us realize that we, as voters, have often made choices about energy policy without knowing we were doing so—and without adequate information. He generally declines to prophesy, but he does foresee a period of conflict and uncertainty until the world reaches a consensus about the right balance between the need for energy and the safety of the environment. He is sure of only one point, and that is "the profound impact of increased energy efficiency, otherwise known as conservation." He writes:

> Though often dismissed or even ridiculed, conservation had turned out to have massive impact. Energy conservation in modern industrial society meant, for the most part, not deprivation, not "small is beautiful," but greater efficiency and technological innovation. The 1975 legislation that mandated a doubling of the average fuel efficiency of new automobile fleets to 27.5 miles per gallon by 1985 would reduce United States oil consumption by 2 million barrels per day from what it would otherwise have been—just about equivalent to the 2 million barrels per day of additional oil production provided by Alaska.

Will we remember that lesson?

—NAOMI BLIVEN

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

JUDITH, by Nicholas Mosley (Dalkey Archive; $19.95). A young woman plays a showy role on the London stage, takes up with a prominent columnist for a satirical magazine, and moves on to a rich artist, with whom she does drugs and engages in such kinky activities as wearing a battery-powered device inside her that her lover can control from several feet away. She dramatically ditches the artist, is rescued by a world-famous thinker, and goes to a guru in India in a place called The Garden, and then to a kind of secret garden on an American military base in England. But to simply describe the events of this novel is to give a false impression. The true action is inside Judith's head, in the quizzical connections she makes between the events and, say, Adam and Eve in their garden, the showy roles people play for each other, and the insistent way life imitates art, so that every act seems to her also to be a message, or code, or not meant to be taken as real at all. The narrative, in the form of several very long letters from Judith to men in her life, conveys in sensible, straightforward, matter-of-fact prose the profound disorientation and exaltation that follow from taking nothing for granted.

KISS OUT, by Jill Eisenstadt (Knopf; $19.95). The author of the popular "From Rockaway" here confirms that her talent is ample and antic, although some readers may feel that the effort required to follow this fast-

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paced, joke-packed narrative is too great to make it worth the trip: a hyper-real jaunt that originates in Sidehill, Queens. For those who can keep up, Sam Lubin, who is the lead singer in a sort of Jewish version of the Partridge Family, becomes engaged to a filthy-rich New Jersey shiksa, an imperturbable eighteen-year-old virgin named Claire Allswell. Sam's identical best buddies, the Arm twins, are alarmed at his determination to capitalize on this lucrative, AIDS-free marriage opportunity, and their disapproval sets in motion a book-long episode of kibitzing which involves a bachelor party nearly fatal to Sam's poodle; a parrot-smuggling mission to the Yucatán; Claire's long-awaited deflowering; and a lowbrow instance of Shakespearean-romance mistaken identity. All this is the indefatigable author's way of proving the old adage that no engagement is final.

GENERAL

FORD MADOX FORD, by Alan Judd (Harvard; $27.50). Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939) was a presence, and an influence, in English and American letters in the first half of this century, but his image has dimmed. His novels "The Good Soldier" and "Parade's End" are generally accepted as masterworks of English prose, yet, despite Graham Greene's bold statement that no novelist of this century is more likely to live than Ford, a revival of interest in his work is not discernible. Perhaps this superlative biography may bring one about. An attempt to see Ford whole, it presents to us the literary man (poet, novelist, travel writer, biographer, and editor of two pathfinding reviews); the discoverer and nurturer of young talent (whose reward was, too often, ingratitude); the anecdotist whose conversation, one friend said, was like caviar; the chronically broke pursuer of the *dolce vita*. Mr. Judd, a well-regarded English novelist, has written a book his subject would admire—sympathetic yet critically balanced, expansive, unacademic, and comfortably conversational in style. Photographs.

BLOOD OF BROTHERS: LIFE AND WAR IN NICARAGUA, by Stephen Kinzer (Putnam; $24.95). This report is impressive in the refinement of its writing and also in the breadth of its subject matter. Mr. Kinzer, who first visited Nicaragua in 1976, as a free-lance journalist, and spent the Sandinista years as a correspondent mainly for the Boston *Globe* and then the *Times*, insists on presenting that country as something more than a problem for—or a victim of—American foreign policy. He portrays a country that, afflicted by revolution and counter-revolution, is nevertheless lively, stylish, and individual. For example, his account of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast cultures—Indian and black, mostly English-speaking—doesn't just retell the details of the Sandinistas' assault on them but shows the reader the physical settings of jungle, river, and coast, and explains how the people there lived. And, as a nonpartisan, Mr. Kinzer points out both the failure of Nicaraguan Communism and the purposeless cruelty of the American-funded Contras' guerrilla war.

UNSTRUNG HEROES: MY IMPROBABLE LIFE WITH FOUR IMPOSSIBLE UNCLES, by Franz Lidz (Random House; $18.95). "Language is used more for talking than any other, don't you think?" asks crazy Uncle Leo, but in this black, loopy memoir conversation is used more for obfuscation than for communication. The author's caustic, bleakly loving scientist father can't answer a straight question, and his mother, Selma, is slowly dying of cancer. As things get rougher and rougher at home, he escapes to the alternative reality offered him by his mad uncles and draws their warmth tight around him. Of the two uncles not in asylums, one thinks Mickey Mantle is trying to kill him with foul balls, and the other collects newspapers, shoelaces, and empty Lucky Strike packs; when their nephew has a nightmare, they tell him, confounding the lyrics of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," to have a "butter dream." But, as if to prove that reason exists far from fixed points, the uncles tenderly orchestrate an elaborate funeral for his pet moth, Cecrops, as preparation for Selma's death.

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DEPT. OF LINGERING GUILT

[*Adv. in the Minneapolis Star Tribune*]

To the two people on the motorcycle that I offended about 8 years ago near Apostolic Bible Church, please call me so I can apologize.

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